



Agroforestry Facts Curry Leaves



Botanical Name	<i>Murraya koenigii</i> (L.) Spreng.
Name in English	Curry Leaf
Name in Kannada	Karibevu
Family	Rutaceae
Seeds Collection	The main season of availability of curry leaf fruits is July – August.
Seeds Processing & Treatment	Within 3 - 4 days of collection of fruits, the seeds should be pulped and sown in nursery beds or poly bags.
Nursery	<p>Propagation through Seed. Division of suckers in the growing season is used as vegetative means of propagation along with cuttings of half-ripe wood.</p> <p>Curry leaf plant/tree is propagated mainly by germinating seeds. However, sprouts from the roots and root cuttings are also common. The mature fruits with seeds are collected and sown in the well prepared nursery germination bed just at the beginning of rainy season. The seedlings may be transferred to either pots or seedling beds or transplantation beds at a distance of about 1.5 to 2 ft. filled with proper compost mixture. It is advisable to plant the seedlings into the land when they are one year old. Till then they are</p>



	<p>allowed to grow in the seedling or transplanting bed or in the pots or in polythene bags.</p>
<p>Plantation Management</p>	<p>It is an evergreen tree growing to 4 m at a medium rate. Suitable for light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils and prefers well-drained soil. Suitable pH: mildly acid, neutral and basic (mildly alkaline) soils. It can grow in semi-shade (light woodland) or no shade. It prefers dry or moist soil and can tolerate drought.</p> <p>The land for commercial cultivation is ploughed and harrowed two or three times and is cleaned from stubbles and stones. In deep, fertile and light soil transplanting is done directly in small pits. Whereas in poor and hard soil, pits are taken at the size of at least 1.5x1.5x2 ft. length, width and depth respectively. The pits are dug about six months before planting and left open to weather for few months after which they are filled with well rotten composts and green leaves.</p> <p>About 4-6 ft. between plant to plant and row to row can be maintained. Hence the pits are dug at that distance. On slopping lands, pits are made in contour lines and adequate soil and water conservation measures are adopted. We can also plant them at three feet distance between plants in the same line and six ft. distance between lines (rectangular design). Seasonal or perennial intercrops are also encouraged along with curry leaf trees.</p> <p>One year old seedlings are planted in the field at the beginning of rainy season. They are planted along with the mud block from the pots or polythene bag.</p> <p>At the time of filling the pits about 15-25 kg of compost per pit is recommended to be applied. Chemical fertilizers mixtures at the rate of 100 gms, 80 gms, and 60 gms of nirtrogen, phosphorus and potassium respectively is incorporated into the soil at the time of planting. There after about the same dose is applied at the end of rainy season. From the second year onwards NPK is raised to 250:100:80 gms per plant. Nitrogenous fertilizers are applied in more quantities to enhance vegetative growth. This is applied in two splits: at the beginning of rainy season and at the end of rainy season in addition to 10-15 kg compost.</p> <p>If irrigation facilities are there the plants should be regularly irrigated. However moisture conservation techniques should be adopted both to conserve rain water or irrigation water.</p>



	<p>Mulching is an advantageous practice. At the same time adequate drainage facilities are provided.</p> <p>Weeding and other intercultural operations are done as and when needed. Hoeing and weeding at the middle and end of rainy season and at the end of winter season will be sufficient.</p> <p>Leaves are economic product of curry leaf tree. To encourage maximum leaf production the plants are topped first at around 100 cm height. This encourages profuse branching on all sides. Allow them to grow and have leaves. Then they are again pruned to encourage further branching. After every pruning or topping of branches additional dosage of NPK and compost mixture should be applied and irrigated. This will result in profuse growth of leaves. Topping is done in such a way that each plant acquire a good shape allowing all branches and leaves to have adequate sunlight.</p>
Model/Spacing	A spacing of 3.5m is used.
Pests, diseases and Management	Fortunately, curry leaf plant is not seriously infected by diseases and pests. If needed very mild pesticides can be used at least 15 days before harvesting of leaves. If there are chances of incidence a preventive spray of malathion or tobacco decoction, etc could be sprayed. For controlling soil borne pests and diseases 1-2 kg of neem cake per plant per year is recommended.
Plant Rotation	10 – 15 years
Yield	250-400 kg of leaves/ha
Uses	<p>The pungent, aromatic leaves are a common ingredient in curries, chutneys, stews etc. Leaves are first fried in ghee or oil until crisp, then added to the curry. An indispensable ingredient in southern Indian curries. The leaves retain their characteristic flavour and aroma even after drying. The leaves dried and powdered and used in spice blends. Leaves can be sun-dried and stored. Another report says that the leaves are little know away from areas in which the plant is grown because the leaves lose their flavour upon being dried. Fruit - a peppery flavour. The black fruit is 8 – 10 mm in diameter.</p> <p>Curry leaf contains several medically active constituents including a glycoside called koenigin, an essential oil and tannins. It is a warming, strongly aromatic herb that improves appetite and digestion. The leaves, roots and bark can all be used internally in the treatment of digestive problems. It has been shown that the leaves increase digestive secretions and relieve nausea, indigestion and vomiting. The leaves can be used internally in treating</p>



	<p>constipation, colic and diarrhoea. The leaves are used in the treatment of diarrhoea and dysentery. The leaves can be applied externally as a poultice to treat burns and wounds. The leaves are harvested as required and used fresh. The roots and bark are harvested as required and can be used fresh or dried. The juice of the fruit, mixed with lime juice (<i>Citrus aurantiifolia</i>) is applied to soothe insect bites and stings. A paste made from the bark is applied to the bites of poisonous insects and other animals.</p>
Buyers /Industries	Local consumption
Harvesting	<p>The pruning or topping is also a part of harvesting of leaves. The leaf quality will decrease if the plant is allowed to flower and fruit. So unless seed production is not indented, pruning and harvesting of leaves should be done before flowering. Similarly where there is winter harvesting is done before the leaves start shedding.</p> <p>Harvested leaves are graded, bundled and marketed or sent to processing units for extraction of oil. V year onwards : 5000 kg/ha once in 3 months which work out to 20,000 kg/ha/year</p>
Economic Returns	At the end of first year 250-400 kg of leaves/ha can be harvested.
Current Market Rate	Rs 310/- per kg