

1. Recommended Variety

Vanilla fragrans (Vanilla planifolia), most commonly grown.

2. Yield

- Expect an average between 300 to 600 kg exportable dry beans per hectare.
- An average of 40 good-harvested beans produce 1kg green bean.
- On an average 5 kg to 6kg green beans produces 1kg dry bean.

3. Vanilla Growing Conditions

- Well- drained humus rich sandy loam soils.
- Evenly distributed rainfall for 10 months over 2000 mm.
- Two months dry period for flowering and pollination.
- Daily temperature between 20° to 30°c.
- Shade cover of 30 to 50% from direct sun light.



- Regular well pruned support trees.
- Good protection from strong wind.

4. Planting Material

- Cutting of 1 to 1.5 metre long from healthy strong vigorous vine.
- From bottom end remove 4 to 5 leaves.
- Leave the cuttings in the shade for 10 days to dry cut ends and assist root development.

5. Spacing

- Between rows 1.5 to 2.5 metres.
- In rows 2.5 to 3.0 metres apart.

6. Field Planting

- Plant support shade trees 6 months before planting vanilla.
- Wiriwiri shade is recommended but glyricidia can also be used.
- Prune shade trees to give 50% shade to young vanilla vines.
- Dig a trench 20 to 30 cm long and 3 to 5cm deep at the base of the support tree.
- Place the vanilla cutting where leaves have been removed in the trench, cover with soil and press. Lift the bottom of the cutting end from the soil and cover the planted portion with 15 to 20 cm of humus around.
- Tie the exposed portion of the vine to the support tree.
- Vines should sprout within 4 to 6 weeks after planting.
- Prune shade trees to give 30% shade from 3rd year after planting.

7. Weed Control and Fertilizer

- Keep 1 meter around vanilla vines weed free.

- Heavy mulch of dry grass and decaying matter must be maintained around the vines always.
- Vanilla is generally organically grown. NPK 13:13:21 can be applied at 150g per vine in April and 150g in September spread a metre around the vines.
- Foliar fertilizer may be sprayed on the vines at monthly interval.

8. Pest and Diseases

(a) Pest

- For insects such as Snails and Slugs, hand pick and destroy them or use Metaldehyde Baits.
- Scales - spray the affected vines with a mixture of Diazinon at 60ml/15L of water with white oil.

(b) Diseases

- For control of diseases such as Rot of cuttings, Anthracnose, Brown stem rot, Black Rot, Root rot, and Tip rot, keep the



plantation in vigorous health with heavy mulch, adequate shade, good soil drainage and loop vines to get many roots. Use Ridomil at 60g/15L of water.

(c) Virus diseases

- To keep vanilla vines virus free, plant only healthy vigorous disease free planting material, remove weeds, pull out disease vines and burn.
- Do not plant in an infected place for at least a month.

9. Flowering and Pollination

- Tie the vines to the support trees regularly.
- When the vine reaches to the top of the support tree retrain it back to the ground and up again to encourage adequate root development.
- Normally vanilla flowers in 3rd year after planting and thereafter every year.
- 2 month dry period is necessary for vanilla to flower.
- Around May 20 cm of growing tip is removed to encourage flowering.
- Flowers appear from August to November with peak in October.
- Pollinate flowers daily early in the morning.
- Pollinate 12 flowers per bunch and 12 bunches per healthy plant.
- Over pollination can kill the vanilla vines.

10. Bean Thinning and Harvesting

- Healthy vines should carry 6 to 8 beans per bunch with 12 bunches per plant.
- Remove small beans 2 months after pollination.
- Beans mature in 7 to 9 months from

pollination.

- Mature beans are ready to harvest when they show slight yellowing at the tip (apex).
- Harvesting commence from April to August.

11. Curing

- Curing is a specialized process.
- Processing should commence within 12 hours of bean harvest.
- There are 4 steps involved.
- Killing or wilting of beans takes 48 hours.
- Sweating or sun curing takes 12 to 15 days.
- Slow drying in shed for 60 days.
- Conditioning or aging process takes 2 months.

12. Quality Of Export Vanilla Beans

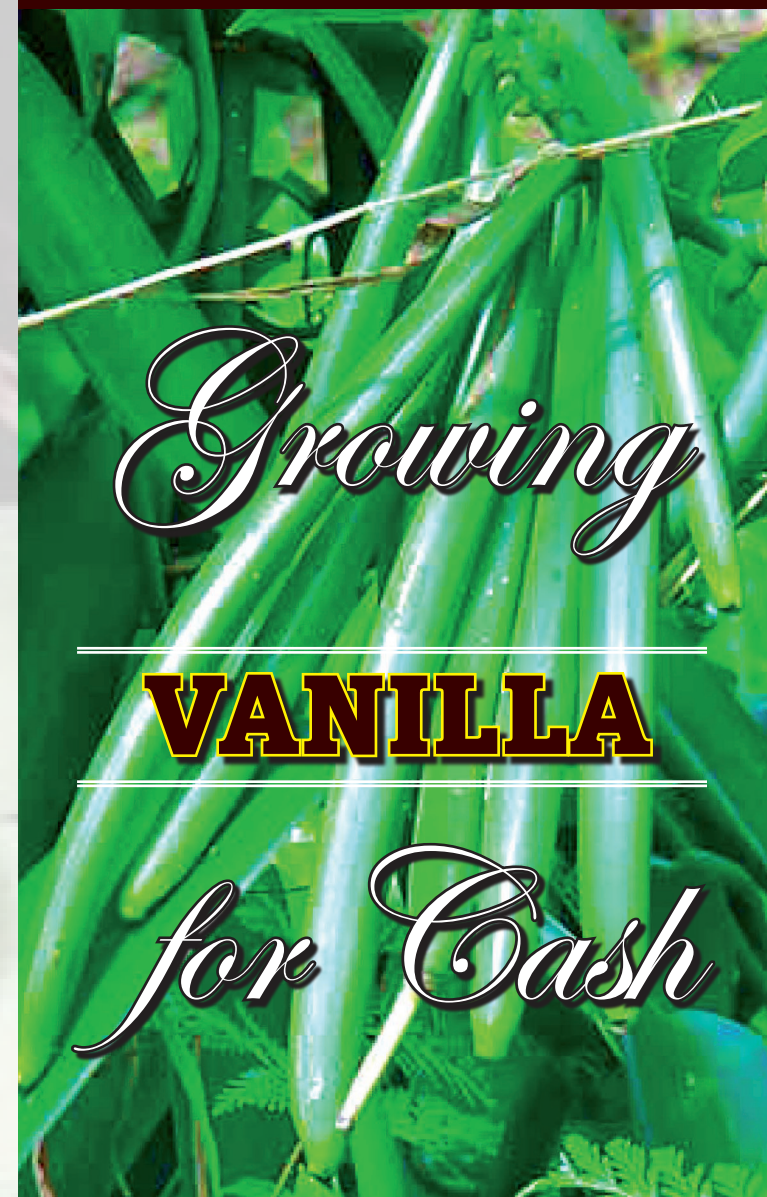
- Beans should have moisture content of 18 to 25%.
- Appearance of soft, smooth, oily dark skin in colour.
- * Length between 16 to 22 cm
- * Vanillin content of 1.8%.
- * Bundles of similar size with slight or no spilt.



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