



Series 6, Episode 8

Charles' Farm, Narok, KENYA

This leaflet contains information on: maize seeds, crop rotation, insuring your crop, solar lights

If undelivered, please return to The Mediae Company, PO Box 215-00502, Karen.

For more information, SMS "MAIZE" to 30606

Maize seeds

Grow the right maize variety for your shamba and get a better harvest. Buy seeds from a good company like **Seed Co**. Some seeds are good for dry areas, some do not get diseases, and some are ready early.

Simba 61 by Seed Co:

- Is ready in 4.5 months
- Does not get Maize Streak Virus, Grey Leaf Spot or Chlorotic Mottle
- Is good for dry areas
- Gives a good harvest in different conditions
- Gives 35-45 bags per acre.

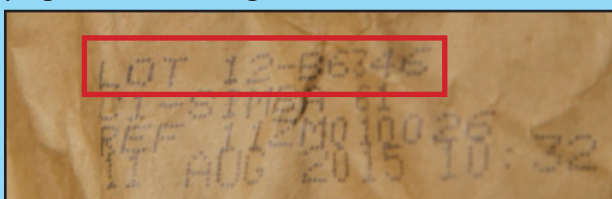


Simba 61 is best for these areas: Kakamega, Mumias, Teso, Kisii & Transmara region, South Rift, Bomet, Mulot and upper areas of Eastern and Central Provinces.

To find out which Maize variety grows best in your area, call iShamba on 0711 082606.

Check your seeds are genuine

SMS the LOT number to 44064. You will get a text saying that it is the right seed.

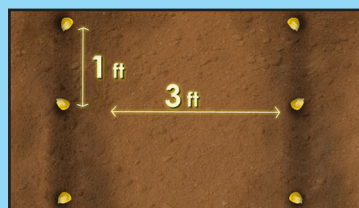


Insure your crop

Seed Co puts scratchcards in its bags of seeds with instructions on how to insure your Maize crop. If there is no rain and your seeds do not grow, you will get your money back.

Planting maize seeds

Plant maize seeds at the start of the rains. Clay soils hold water better than sandy soils. Plant seeds 2 cm deep in clay soil and 5 cm deep in sandy soil. Plant only in firm, moist soil for good contact between seed and soil. This will give you good germination.



Plant 1 Maize seed in each hole. Plant 1 foot apart in rows 3 feet apart.

To make seeds grow faster, soak in water for 12 hours (overnight). **You must plant the seeds in wet soil the next day.**

Crop Rotation

Crop rotation is an important part of Conservation Agriculture.

Crop rotation:

- Reduces weeds, pests and diseases.
- Makes the soil more fertile, e.g. Beans add nitrogen.
- Lets air into the soil. Microorganisms need air to make nutrients for your crop. They make the soil better.



Earthworms are good for your soil. They make it more fertile.

Maize uses shallow soil and Beans use deep soil. When planted in the same field as part of crop rotation, each crop makes the soil better for the other crop. You will get a good harvest.



Maize roots are short and fibrous. They like the soil near the top.



Bean roots are long. They grow deep into the soil.

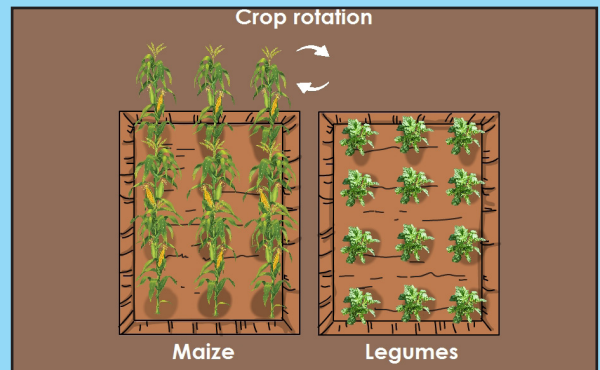
How to rotate your crops

1st season: plant a cereal crop like Maize, Wheat or Sorghum.

2nd season: plant a legume, like Cowpea, Soybean or Pigeon Pea.

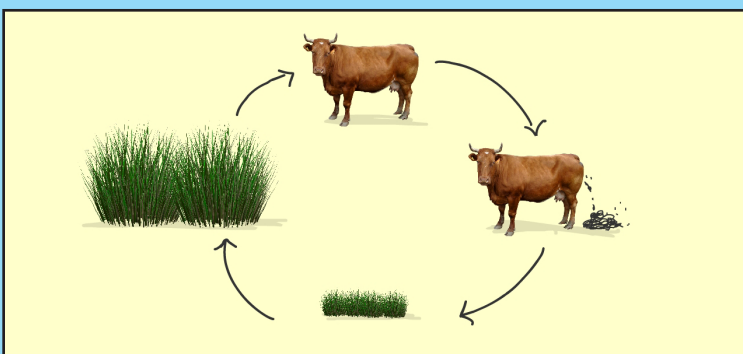
3rd season: plant a cereal or potato family crop like potato, tomato, pepper.

4th season: plant a legume or brassica crop like cabbage, sukuma wiki



Let your cows help to grow their own food

Use cow manure to fertilise fodder crops. Feed the fodder crops to your cows.



Intercropping Maize and Beans

Intercropping is where you plant lines of one crop, like Beans, between lines of another crop, like Maize.



Maize and Beans grow well together. Maize gives shade to the Beans. Beans cover the soil which stops water loss, weeds, pests, and diseases. Beans also add **nitrogen** which makes Maize healthier.

Insuring your Crop

Most farmers have lost crops and/or livestock at some point. It is very upsetting. To stop this happening to you, make sure you have insurance.

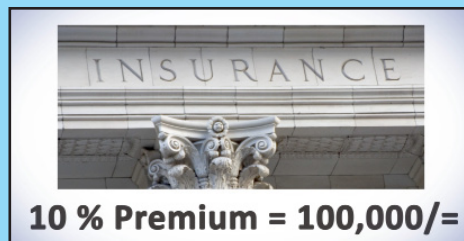
How does insurance work?

You can insure your seeds, crops or even your dairy cow. You pay a premium to an insurance company. If your crop fails or your cow dies, the insurance company will give you the money so you do not lose out. If you get a harvest, the insurance company keeps the money you paid them.

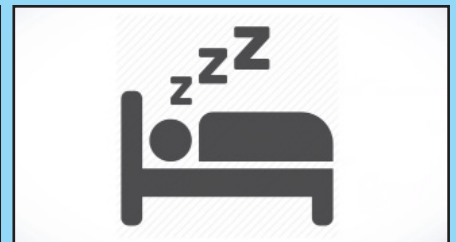
For example:



You pay the insurance company a premium of 10%.



Your field usually gives a harvest worth KSh 1 million.



You can sleep well knowing your crop is protected.



If the rains do not come and your crop fails, the insurance company will pay you KSh 1 million.



If the rain comes, you will get a good harvest and make KSh 1 million!

Ways to get insurance:

Direct with an insurance company or agent.

With a farmers group or co-operative.

Insure as a group with your neighbours. Premiums will be lower than if you have insurance on your own.

As a bundle with a loan.

Some banks offer insurance when they give you a loan. This saves you time as you do not have to look for an insurance company.

Be Smart



Make sure you have all of the policy documents before you pay. Read the small print on the policy carefully.



Check the company with the *Insurance Regulatory Authority*. Call 0800-724499. Only deal with a good insurance company.

For more information, SMS "BANK" to 30606

Solar lights

Solar lights are better for your health than kerosene lamps. You can work in the evenings without making your eyes sore. You do not have to buy kerosene so you save money. The sun is free!

The D30 system from d.light comes with a solar panel to fix to your roof. The solar panel uses energy from the sun to charge a battery. This battery powers 3 lights. It can also charge a radio, a torch and your mobile



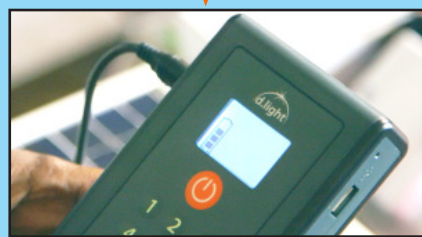
The Solar panel charges the battery.



The battery powers 3 lights



Charges a radio



THE BATTERY.

Buy d.light products from Total Stations countrywide.
For more information on d.light products, send a free SMS to 21555 or call the toll free line 0800 721 110.



Charges your mobile phone



Charges a torch

For more information, SMS "SOLAR" to 30606

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