



NAVCDP
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAIN
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

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Harvesting Procedure for Pyrethrum

Preparations prior to harvesting.

Ensure you have the following:

- A correct harvesting container – well-ventilated baskets are preferred.
- Adequate labour.
- Drying facilities – such as tarpaulins or solar dryers.
- Packaging containers – like gunny bags.
- A suitable temporary storage facility before transporting to the collection centre or processing factory.

Harvesting basket

This is a basket for collecting harvested pyrethrum flowers. It has good ventilation and aeration to prevent fermentation of picked flowers.

Well-ventilated harvesting containers, such as the harvesting basket, prevent the fermentation of pyrethrum flowers. Harvesting flowers in this basket helps prevent flower fermentation, resulting in higher-quality flowers with increased pyrethrin content. It is advisable to avoid the use of polyethylene bags and tins, as they contribute to fermentation. The 'harvesting basket' effectively controls fermentation due to its excellent ventilation and aeration capabilities.

Harvesting of pyrethrum flowers

The harvesting procedure for pyrethrum flowers involves picking mature flowers at the right maturity stage to maximize pyrethrin content and quality. The recommended picking method is to hold the flower between the first and second finger and then jerk the flower head with the thumb.



Pyrethrum harvesting basket (Source: Robert Lagat, KALRO Molo)





Harvesting pyrethrum flowers (Source: Lusike Wasilwa)

Precautions during harvesting for enhanced quality:

- Inappropriate harvesting procedure limits productivity by resulting in poor quality and lower pyrethrin content in pyrethrum flowers. This includes picking stalks alongside flowers, harvesting under rainy conditions, or picking wet flowers, all of which lead to fermentation and reduced pyrethrin content.
- Young and overblown flowers contain low pyrethrin content, and if picked in large quantities, they can lower the overall pyrethrin content.
- Flowers should be harvested in open baskets.
- Flowers should not be compacted in the basket.
- Picked flowers should be dried soon after harvesting.
- Ensure flowers are picked without petioles/twigs.



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