Bioversity International is a global research-for-development organization. We have a vision – that agricultural biodiversity nourishes people and sustains the planet.

We deliver scientific evidence, management practices and policy options to use and safeguard agricultural and tree biodiversity to attain sustainable global food and nutrition security. We work with partners in low-income countries in different regions where agricultural and tree biodiversity can contribute to improved nutrition, resilience, productivity and climate change adaptation.

Bioversity International is a member of the CGIAR Consortium – a global research partnership for a food-secure future.

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Busia County and its challenges

Situated at the extreme western border of Kenya, at the gateway with Uganda and close to Lake Victoria, Busia County is rich in cultural diversity. Luhya, Teso and Luo communities share Busia’s seven sub-counties, most of them making a living as small-scale farmers and fishermen. Despite the favourable climate and relatively fertile soils, plant and animal diversity in Busia is rapidly fading. Most of the large landowners practice intensive agriculture and have devoted large portions of land to sugarcane farming and destroying the natural environment. Smaller landowners (the average farm size is 0.5 ha) grow mainly beans and improved maize varieties, that have replaced the traditional landraces that are better adapted to the environment. When crops fail and farmers wish to revert to cultivating their landraces, these have long been lost and seeds are hard to come by.

Poverty rates in Busia range from 63% to 74% and over two-thirds of the population is unable to meet its basic food minimum requirements.

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Credit: Alessandra Grasso & Lusike Wasilwa, BFN Project Kenya
Situated at the extreme western border of Kenya, at the gateway with Uganda and close to Lake Victoria, Busia County is rich in cultural diversity. Luhya, Teso and Luo communities share Busia’s seven sub-counties, most of them making a living as small-scale farmers and fishermen.

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**Introduction**

**“Habari za asubuhis!”** Another day begins in Busia County in Western Kenya and most families will be sitting down to a cup of sweet milk tea or chai, accompanied by wheat bread with margarine and jam. The younger children might have a thin maize porridge called *uji*, while preferred starchy alternatives include *chapati* (a flat wheat bread) or a fried doughnut called *mandazi*.

Although we are used to these foods now, the ingredients they are made with did not always grow in Kenya, but were introduced from foreign lands many years ago. So what did our ancestors eat before the great explorers brought in maize from the Americas, tea from China and wheat from Central Asia?

---

Kenya is rich in food plants and animals.

*7,000 different edible plant species* live here. Some of these, like amaranth, grow all over Kenya, but others grow only in some regions or in remote and isolated places due to particular weather and soil conditions. There are also many animal breeds (indigenous chicken, quails, ducks, rabbits, goats, cows, camels), different fish living in sea and lakes, and insects that are still eaten in some parts of the country. *So why eat imported foods with so much available around us?*
Before wheat was available for making bread, starchy staples in our grandparents’ diets included sorghum and finger millet, a cereal that contains high levels of calcium for bone health, iron for vitality and energy and methionine for joint health. Their meals included many other indigenous vegetables and fruits that are rich in energy, minerals and vitamins or have medicinal properties that are missing from many imported foods. For example, the Benghal dayflower or Wandering Jew (known respectively as *linyolonyolo/sinyolonyolo/ekiliokiti* among the Khayo, Samia and the Teso communities) cures fever and inflammation. Compared to exotic species, indigenous plants and breeds are naturally hardy; many are pest and disease resistant, drought-tolerant and are strategically available when other foods are not ready for harvest or food is scarce.

The problem is that many of these species are disappearing due partly to land degradation and habitat destruction, but also to neglect and changing food habits. Traditional knowledge linked to the cultivation/breeding or collection/hunting and preparation of these “forgotten foods” is also disappearing as youth are attracted to more Western-style diets and perceive these foods as “inferior” or “backwards”. Kenyans in general do not eat enough food of all kinds, a habit that is particularly harmful for children’s nutrition.

We argue that indigenous foods are hip and wholesome, but more importantly that they offer a sustainable and affordable option for diversifying diets.

This book is intended as a celebration of the traditional food system of the Khayo, Samia and the Teso communities of Busia County in Western Kenya and is a testimony to those farmers that still value, consume and conserve these traditional species. We hope it will help you to appreciate our incredible food culture, learn to recognize the different species, and know more about their nutritional properties and the proper way of preparing or preserving these foods.

Let us celebrate traditional Kenyan food and culture by preparing these dishes at home!
Food is not just nourishment. As well as providing energy and nutrients to our bodies, it helps keep local traditions and cultural identity alive. Traditional delicacies such as *wimbi* (finger millet, page 23), *chimbande* (Bambara groundnut, page 110), *tsisaka* (spider plant, page 46), and *omurere* (jute mallow, page 52) are still consumed in Busia, but mostly during cultural and religious festivals or other special occasions.

As Kenya steps into the globalized world and imported convenience foods become more common, much of the food culture is being lost along with knowledge about collection and preparation. Traditional foods help us remember who we are and where we come from.
Weddings

Weddings call for **kuku kienyeji** - family-reared, indigenous chickens - that are killed and prepared for the big occasion. Chicken is accompanied by **ugali**, home-made samosas, beans, bananas and strongly brewed sweet Kenyan tea. Graduations and the like also call for goat, beef, fish, chapati, rice, and hidden gems such as **likhubi** (cowpea leaves, page 77) and **lidodo** (amaranth) to recognize the achievements and efforts of loved ones.

Family Farewells

Before the lengthy goodbyes commence, one last family meal is shared and enjoyed as a send-off and token of continued support from afar. The vast array of foods cleverly pieced together include rice, chapati, chicken, beef, fish, saga (page 46), papaya, mango and guava. Upon leaving, whether it be across the hills or the ocean, the connection with and appreciation for the diverse Kenyan landscape that provided this final supper only grows.

In a place where the regular use of the mother tongue and the donning of traditional attire are considered vital for identification and community pride, diverse and nutritious local food intertwines itself into Busia’s rich cultural values, traditions, and deep-rooted history. A budding landscape offering the purest of ingredients is cared for and cherished, and chakula shared is a community united.
Eating as many different foods as possible in our meals helps us and our families stay healthy. Local foods contain the same (sometimes more) of the nutrients that help us stay strong and fight off sickness. Different foods perform different functions in our body:

* **Starchy foods** like rice, maize, give our body energy to move, work and think — **GO FOODS**

* **Animal proteins** like fish, meat, eggs and insects help our bodies grow, build muscle and repair themselves — **GROW FOODS**

* **Fruits and vegetables** contain vitamins and minerals that protect our bodies from disease and help fight infection — **GLOW FOODS**

Most of these foods are available around us. We may have forgotten they exist and the ways in which they are prepared, so recognizing the different foods and knowing to which group they belong helps us decide what to eat and what to prepare for our loved ones.

In this recipe book you will find photos to help you recognize the main ingredients of a dish.

Under the photo of the ingredient, you will find a description of the traditional knowledge linked to the food and a summary of its nutritional properties (i.e. the nutrients it contains).

Recipes are then given for each ingredient. Next to the recipe you will find some symbols corresponding to the different food groups:

**GO (Energy-giving)**

**GROW (Body-building)**

**GLOW (Protective)**

This will help you decide which food to cook for what purpose. Ideally, you will want to have **ALL** food groups in your meal. If possible, try and vary the foods within those food groups so that you don’t eat the same food every day. For example, in the **GO** group eat Rice on Monday, Ugali on Tuesday, Cassava on Wednesday and so on. On page 14 you will also find suggested menus for each day to help you vary your diets and obtain all the nutrients you need to keep your family healthy.

We suggest you read through the book once and familiarize yourself with the foods you don’t know well and learn to recognize the food group to which they belong.
Your plate should look like...

To be healthy you need a balanced diet which contains **carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals** and **fiber** in the right quantities. A healthy diet contains different types of foods that perform different functions in our body. This is an example of how your plate should look.

**GROW Foods**

**Body building foods** contain **proteins** (plant and animal)
- Eggs, omelettes
- Fish (e.g. omena)
- Meat
- Milk
- Chicken
- Insects (e.g. chiswa)
- Beans
- Green grams
- Peas

**GLOW Foods**

**Protective foods** contain **vitamins** that protect the body from disease. They include:

- Mangoes
- Oranges
- Watermelon
- Papaya

**Vegetables**
- Cowpea leaves (*kunde*)
- Jute mallow (*murenda*)
- Spider plant (*lisaka*)
- Amaranth (*dodo*)

**GO Foods**

**Energy-rich foods** contain **carbohydrates** and include:
- Brown ugali
- Potatoes
- Cassava
- Matoke
- Rice
- Arrowroot
- Yam
- Bananas
Hygiene in preparation

To stop illness spreading between family members, children and communities there are 6 important safety steps to remember before you handle food:

1. Wash your hands with soap and clean water, especially after visiting the toilet, blowing your nose, plaiting hair, coming from the farm and handling animals.

2. Wash cooking equipment with soap and clean water before and after use and when preparing different foods using the same equipment.

3. Wash fruit and vegetables in clean, safe water very well to remove all dirt that may cause diarrhea or gastric upset (vomiting) as well as fertilizers, and pesticides.

4. Prepare raw and cooked food separately; use separate chopping boards and utensils where possible. This prevents cross-contamination, or transferring micro-organisms from contaminated food to uncontaminated food (by hands, utensils, or storage).

5. Minimize time food is left at unsafe (warm) temperatures during preparation.

6. Ensure animal products are well-cooked to avoid food-borne infections (i.e. diarrhea).

To preserve all the goodness

• First wash and then chop leafy greens, or important nutrients will be lost in the water.

• If you need to chop leafy green vegetables, do not chop them too finely as this will reduce the amounts of nutrients when cooking.

• Do not over-cook vegetables, as this will also increase nutrient loss.

• When slow cooking, cover food to retain nutrients and save energy.

• Only remove skin off fruit and vegetables if necessary or inedible as they also contain vitamins.

• Pre-soak legumes and pulses to release nutrients and save on fuel since soaked legumes and pulses take a shorter time to cook.
### Serving size recommendations

1 CUP = 1 TUB = 2 servings (250g)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serving Sizes</th>
<th>GO FOODS</th>
<th>GLOW FOODS</th>
<th>GROW FOODS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Each day per Adult</td>
<td>Cereals, Grains, Tubers and Roots</td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>Fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child</td>
<td>3-5 cups (6-11 servings)</td>
<td>1.5–2.5 cups (3-5 servings) cooked</td>
<td>1-2 cups (2-4 servings) of chopped or whole fruit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Each day per Child | 3 cups (6 servings) | 1.5 cups (3 servings) | 1 cup (2 servings) | 1 cup (2 servings) |

### Advice

- Children from 6-8 months of age should have mashed vegetables
- Children from 9-23 months of age should have finely chopped or mashed vegetables
- Children from 24 months- 3 years old should have chopped vegetables

**Stock up on vitamins and fight disease!**

Choose at least 5 different colours of vegetables each day and 2 varieties of fruit to receive a variety of vitamins and minerals.
## Suggested menu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breakfast</strong></td>
<td>Finger millet porridge ugali (page 24)</td>
<td>Roasted sweet potato (page 28)</td>
<td>Pigeon pea and maize (page 118)</td>
<td>Mushrooms with peanut butter (page 125)</td>
<td>Banana ugali (pages 32 and 33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scrambled egg</td>
<td>Banana</td>
<td>Watermelon</td>
<td>Waterpear (<em>mzambarau</em>)</td>
<td>Boiled eggs (page 92)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Glass of milk</td>
<td>Tea with milk</td>
<td>Glass of milk</td>
<td>Tea with milk</td>
<td>Tamarind juice (page 132)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Omushenye prepared from green grams (page 123)</td>
<td>Steamed banana (page 34)</td>
<td>Cassava leaves with groundnut paste (page 72)</td>
<td>Pumpkin leaves in fresh milk (page 61)</td>
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<td>Omushenye bean dish (page 118)</td>
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<td>Sorghum ugali (page 38)</td>
<td>Cassava ugali (page 30)</td>
<td>Rabbit meat with sauce (page 97)</td>
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<td>Fresh omena (page 104)</td>
<td>Boiled pumpkin fruit (page 64)</td>
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<td>Mango</td>
<td>Roselle juice (page 131)</td>
<td>Avocado</td>
<td>Pawpaw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Guidelines for Healthy Diets, 2017, Kenya Ministry of Health
These charts show the availability of some of the more common foods given in this recipe book, and is a useful tool when meal planning.

### GO Foods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staples</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
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<td>Cassava (p. 29)</td>
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<td>Millet (p. 23)</td>
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### GROW Foods

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<thead>
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<th>Legumes, nuts and seeds</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cowpeas (p. 77)</td>
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<td>Groundnuts (p. 110)</td>
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<td>Sesame (p. 120)</td>
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- **Available in large quantities**
- **Available in small quantities**
- **Not available**

### Vegetables

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<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
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<td>Sweet Potato Leaves (p. 68)</td>
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<td>Nightshade (p. 73)</td>
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### Fruits

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Traditional preparations: Flour

The recipes in this book use preparation methods that are traditional to the Samia, Khayo and Teso communities. On the following pages are the instructions for how to traditionally prepare finger millet, cassava tubers, lye, and ghee.

**Processing finger millet (Eleusine coracana)**
- Finger millet and sorghum grains are first roasted on a pan before milling. Roasting improves flavour and also makes the flour easier to knead, overall enhancing texture of the final ugali
- The cereals like millet can be ground using a stone. Grind the flour for three hours to make a fine flour
- Throw a little the flour on wall, if it sticks on the wall then it is finely ground
- If mixing flours, use this ratio
cassava : finger millet: : sorghum  =  2Kg : ¼ Kg : ¼ Kg

**Processing cassava tubers to flour**
- Harvest and peel the cassava tubers
- Dry them in the sun
- Ferment the tubers by storing them in a sack for 3 days (removes cyanide). Alternatively cover the cassava tubers with banana leaves and put a stone on top
- Mould forms during fermentation, scrape to remove the mould
- Break the cassava into smaller pieces and dry them in the sun
- The tubers are ready for milling

**Processing fermented cassava (fundia) to flour**
- Harvest and peel the cassava tubers
- Ferment the tubers by keeping them in a sack for 3 days, mould will form
- After 3 days, remove the tubers and scrape off the mould
- Dry the tubers in the sun for 2 days and then cut them into small pieces
- Mix the tubers with dry sorghum and finger millet grain
- Mill them to a flour using a grinding stone or a posho mill

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Traditional lye is used across the communities in cooking vegetables to tenderize vegetables, fix the deep green colour, and shorten cooking time which is essential in retention of vital vitamins and minerals. Traditionally, vegetables are boiled or blanched in traditional lye, seasoned with salt and other food additives then served with ugali (a type of stiff porridge) or with boiled tubers.

It is also used medicinally to treat tapeworms by drinking 2 tablespoons in the morning and evening, and to treat coughs by drinking ½ small cup. To treat acidity and nausea, you can add salt to the ash and lick it. It is also believed to clear bacterial infections.

**Preparation of traditional lye (mukherekha) Luhya style**

- Obtain maize cobs or bean pods
- Dry the plant material for 5 days until completely dry
- Burn the plants and filter the ash using a perforated tin of traditional *olukherekho*
- Use the lye to cook *murenda* or other vegetables like cowpea, *mitoo*, *nderema*
- Traditional lye retains the deep green colour of *murenda* and helps preserve the cooked vegetable longer. It also enhances the slimy texture of *murenda* when cooking. The vegetables also cook for a shorter time because it is a tenderizer

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Traditional lye (mukherekha) Samia style

Plants used

- Bean pods and leaves
- Banana peels
- Finger millet straws
- Lukhafwa (grass)
- Maize cobs (used as firewood but do not mix)

Preparation

- Dry the plants for one day
- Burn the plants to a white ash
- Lump the ash together
- Filter the ash to obtain an even consistency that is brownish in colour. Filter using a perforated container or olusherekho
- The leftover maize cob ash can be collected from the fire place and used as well. Maize cob filtrate is more potent.

Traditional lye (abalang) Teso style

Plants used

- Dry maize cobs (abolei)
- Bean pods
- Cassava stems
- Leaves and stems of groundnut plant
- Emelait
- Green banana peelings (dry)
- Makora
- Leaves of pawpaw
- Abigito (grass growing on the mountain)
- Esamai (type of grass from marshy areas)
- Sweet potato vines
- Maize stalks

The plant should be dry (if they’ve been rained on previously, the abalang will not be concentrated). Burn the plant while stirring to get an even mixture for 4 hours. Leave the plant to burn over night and collect the ash in the morning. The best filtrate is obtained from banana peelings, bean pods and groundnut plant.

If you chose, you can mix the ash of two different plants together.

Filter the ash using a perforated tin at the bottom and collect abalang in another container.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Traditional salt (*mukhebano*) Khayo style

- Cut the reeds (*maduru*) and leave them to dry for 5 days
- Burn the reeds using fire while singing so that it burns well
- Collect the ash, filtrate it using a perforated tin
- Put the filtrate in a clean pot (*nungiro*) and cover
- Boil the filtrate till it evaporates to get white crystals. The result is traditional salt, called *mukhebano*. Leave it to dry to remove the remaining water
- Use the traditional salt as a tenderizer for cooking beef, dried fish or chicken, or to add flavour.

Traditional medicinal uses

- Fights throat infection
- Relieves heart burn
- Eases coughing in children
- Protects against osteoporosis
- Removes fat from the body
- Helps with hypertension

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Ghee is made from milk and is used in the preparation of many traditional dishes as flavouring as it can reduce bitterness, or as a source of oil.

Animal fat and ghee contribute towards the provision of dietary fat.

### Preparation of ghee

- Obtain fresh milk from a cow and put it into a gourd (*sisabo*)
- Shake the gourd (*kusacha*) to separate the ghee from the milk
- Look inside the gourd to see if the ghee has collected. If so, remove the milk and leave the fat
- When using a new *sisabo*, add fresh milk and shake directly. If using a *sisabo* that already has leftover milk in it, put it in the sun to melt the old ghee for one hour before shaking
- Repeat the first four steps every day for 3 days. Fat should accumulate in the gourd
- On day 4, pour the fat into an *esikae* (pot with a very wide mouth). Add water to clean the fat
- Meanwhile heat another empty pot
- Remove the fat from the *esikae* and put it in another container, leaving the water behind
- Put the fat in the heating pot (*nungiro*) and stir
- Wash the pot (*esikae*) and dry it, then pour the heated fat into the *esikae*
- When the hardened pieces from the fat settle down, carefully remove the heated fat from the *esikae* and leave the hardened pieces behind
- Serve the hard pieces with soft ugali. It is a delicacy for children. Traditional spoons made from crocodile scales called *masari* are used to eat hard ghee left overs

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Finger millet is rich in dietary fibre and is one of the easiest grains to digest. It is digested at a slower rate and so makes you feel fuller for longer. This drought-tolerant African cereal is high in calcium, rich in iron and contains the amino acid methionine, important for joint health. Used in porridge it is ideal for feeding to infants and the elderly, but can also be used in many sweet and savoury dishes.

Nutritional value

- Fibre
- Calcium
- Riboflavin
- Iron

Credit: Hannah Gentle, BFN Project Global
How to pick
Sour milk is collected within one week after cow has given birth.

How to preserve
Store grains in an air-tight container.

FINGER MILLET

Edoso sour milk ugali

Ingredients

- Sour milk
- Finger millet flour

Preparation

- Prepare sour milk by putting it in a gourd (etuo) to ferment for 5 days
- Shake the milk well and put it in a sufuria
- Boil the milk until it boils and add finger millet flour
- Stir vigorously to make ugali using a wooden spoon (mwiko)
- Let the ugali cook for 20 minutes over a medium fire so that it doesn’t burn
- Serve the ugali with tea

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
FINGER MILLET

Akiria

Ingredients

• Maize flour
• Finger millet flour

Preparation

• Mill maize and finger millet cereal to a flour
• Ferment the flour for 3 days
• Roast the fermented flour on a pan to get akiria
• Eat akiria as a snack

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya

How to preserve
Store grains in an air-tight container.
FOUNDER MILLET
Obusera

Note
Tamarind juice needs to be prepared in advance, see recipe on page 132.

Ingredients
• 3 tbsps. of finger millet flour
• 1 tbsp. of cassava flour
• 2 tbsps. of sorghum flour
• 6 tamarind fruits (mukhuwa)
• No sugar added

Preparation
• Place clean water in a pan or sufuria and bring to a boil
• Mix all the flour ingredients together and add to the boiling water
• Stir well to prevent lumps from forming. Cook for 10 minutes
• In the meantime, prepare the tamarind juice
• Add the tamarind juice to the cooking flour mixture and stir well
• Simmer for another 5 minutes
• Serve warm with boiled sweet potatoes or cassava

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Sweet potato

Ipomoea batata

In times of drought sweet potatoes become an important source of nourishment. They can be boiled or fried, and their leaves are nutritious, too. Eating orange-fleshed sweet potatoes is a good source of beta carotene, an antioxidant important for the immune system.

Food Facts

In times of drought sweet potatoes become an important source of nourishment. They can be boiled or fried, and their leaves are nutritious, too. Eating orange-fleshed sweet potatoes is a good source of beta carotene, an antioxidant important for the immune system.

Nutritional value

◊ Vitamins A, C & E
◊ Beta Carotene
◊ Fibre (in the skin)
◊ Manganese

Credit: Lidio Coradin, BFN Project Brazil
Roasted sweet potatoes

How to pick
Harvest from the ground right before cooking.

How to preserve
Preserve in the ground until ready, otherwise store in a cool, dry place.

Ingredients
- Fresh sweet potatoes
- Salt to taste

Preparation
- Roast the sweet potatoes for 20 minutes with the skin
- Peel them and season with salt
- Serve with tea or porridge as a snack

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Like sweet potatoes, cassava are another important source of nourishment during droughts. They can be milled to a flour, mashed and mixed with vegetables, or turned into infant food. They are high in calories but low in micronutrient content. The leaves can also be consumed (page 71), but both leaves and roots must be cooked well in order to eliminate toxicity.

Food Facts

Nutritional value

- Carbohydrates
- Thiamine
- Calcium
- Phosphorus
**CASSAVA**

**Obusuma Ugali**

**Ingredients**
- Cassava flour
- Finger millet flour
- Sorghum flour

**Preparation**
- Bring water in a *nyafuka* pot to a boil
- Sieve the three flours well
- Add all flour at once to the boiling water and leave it to cook for 5 minutes
- Stir the mixture slowly to ensure there are no lumps. Be careful when breaking the lumps as to not break the pot
- Leave to cook for 15 minutes
- Remove the pot from fire and smooth the ugali to a round shape
- Serve warm with vegetable sauce or meat

**How to preserve**
Preserve in the ground until ready, otherwise store in a cool, dry place.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Banana - Maramwa (Khayo)  
Musa spp.

Food Facts

Bananas can be steamed, stewed, mashed, or mixed with flour to make ugali. When mashed it can be fed to infants. The leaves of the banana plant can be used for food storage by wrapping foods or covering pots, also known as ndakala or matemwa in Samia.

Nutritional value

◊ Potassium
◊ Vitamins B6 & C
◊ Magnesium
◊ Fibre

Credit: SuSanA, distributed under CC BY License 2.0
**BANANA**

*Obusuma bwe matemwa* Banana ugali

---

**How to pick**
Harvest when the bananas turn from dark green to light green. Allow them to continue ripening at home.

**How to preserve**
Keep bananas in a cool, dry place away from other fruits.

---

**Ingredients**
- Ripe bananas (bokiboki type)
- Flour

**Preparation**
- Boil the ripe, peeled bananas in water until well cooked, ensuring that some water remains
- Pour in the flour and stir vigorously to make ugali
- Cook for 15 minutes
- Mould the ugali to a round shape using a wooden spoon (*mwiko*)
- Serve with vegetables, meat sauce or tea

---

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
**BANANA**

**Akudume Banana ugali**

**Ingredients**
- Ripe bananas (bokiboki type)
- Flour

**Preparation**
- Peel the matured bananas and split them lengthwise to quicken dry
- Dry for 3 days
- Mill dried banana and finger millet grain to flour. You can use sorghum flour instead of finger millet flour if need be
- Put water in *atikwa* (pot) to boil
- Add flour, leave it to boil for 2 minutes, then use a wooden spoon (*mwiko*) to stir
- Cook for 10 minutes
- Serve the ugali or keep it wrapped in banana leaves for later use
- To heat, use *ekukutu* (*kisiki*) firewood which lasts a long time
- Serve with vegetable sauce or meat

**How to pick**
Harvest when the bananas turn from dark green to light green. Allow them to continue ripening at home. Bokiboki bananas should be ripened to a yellow colour before cooking.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Matemwa Steamed banana

**Ingredients**
- Cooking green banana fruit (*matemwa*)

**Preparation**
- Peel the banana fruits
- Wrap the peeled banana in banana leaves
- Tie the banana leaves and put in boiling water in a pot (*nungiro*)
- Cook for 40 minutes
- Remove the banana leaves containing cooked banana and put aside
- Press the cooked banana to mash while still in the leaves
- Serve warm with meat stew or tea

How to pick
Harvest when the bananas turn from dark green to light green. Allow them to continue ripening at home.

How to preserve
Keep bananas in a cool, dry place away from other fruits.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
BANANA

Matemwa madekhe

Ingredients

• 10 mature green cooking bananas

Preparation

• Put the whole bananas in the *sufuria* with enough water for cooking. Do not peel them
• Cover the *sufuria* tightly with a lid of banana fibres
• Cook for 20 minutes until soft
• Remove from fire, peel the cooked banana, salt to taste
• Serve with tea or porridge

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya

How to pick
Harvest when the bananas turn from dark green to light green. Allow them to continue ripening at home.

How to preserve
Keep bananas in a cool, dry place away from other fruits.
**BANANA**

**Boiled bokiboki bananas**

**How to pick**
Harvest when the bananas turn from dark green to light green. Allow them to continue ripening at home. Bokiboki bananas should be ripened to a yellow colour before cooking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ripe bananas (bokiboki type)</td>
<td>• Put the bananas in a sufuria (do not peel the bananas)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Salt</td>
<td>• Add enough cooking water</td>
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<td>• Cover the sufuria with banana leaves and place another lid on top</td>
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<td>• Cook the bananas for 30 minutes when the water dries up</td>
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<td>• Remove the sufuria from heat source and place it aside for the bananas to cool a little</td>
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<td>• Peel the bananas, and sprinkle salt (optional)</td>
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<td>• Serve warm with tea</td>
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Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Sorghum is a drought tolerant grass, used widely as animal feed as well as for human consumption. It is a powerhouse in terms of nutrients, providing vitamins like niacin, thiamin, riboflavin and of magnesium, iron, copper, calcium, phosphorus, potassium as well as a significant amount of dietary fiber. Its antioxidant properties have been directly connected to a reduced chance of developing various types of cancer. Can be eaten safely by those suffering from celiac disease since it is gluten free. It is used in the preparation of foods such as couscous, sorghum flour, porridge and molasses and distilled beverages.

**Nutritional value**
- Carbohydrates
- Calcium
- Phosphorus
- Potassium

*Credit: Marco Schmidt, distributed under CC BY-SA License 2.5*
**SORGHUM**

*Atap kimwa* Sorghum ugali

---

**Ingredients**

- Sorghum flour

**Preparation**

- Boil enough cooking water in a *sufuria*
- Add the sorghum flour and stir vigorously
- Leave it to cook for 20 minutes over a medium fire while stirring it occasionally
- Mould it well and remove the ugali from the *sufuria*
- Serve warm with meat sauce or traditional vegetable sauce

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**How to preserve**

Preserve in the ground until ready, otherwise store in a cool, dry place.

---

*Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya*
Vine spinach - Nderema (Khayo)

Basella alba

A fast-growing, soft-stemmed vine whose thick, semi-succulent, heart-shaped leaves are widely used as a vegetable. The leaves have a mild flavour and mucilaginous texture and are a good source of protein, fibre, vitamins, riboflavin, niacin, thiamine and minerals such as calcium, magnesium and iron. They can be boiled to thicken soups or stir fried with garlic and chili peppers.

Food Facts

Nutritional value

- Vitamins A, C, E K & B9 (folic acid)
- Calcium
- Magnesium
- Fibre

Credit: Joydeep, distributed under CC BY-SA License 3.0
Note

Nderema can be mixed with pumpkin or cowpea leaves and cooked in traditional lye. It is a succulent vegetable hence little water is used when cooking. When cooking nderema one is advised not to talk to anyone.

Ingredients

- 5 handfuls of nderema (vine spinach)
- 1/4 cup of traditional lye (mukherekha)
- cup of fresh milk
- 2 tbsps. of ghee
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Pluck the leaves from stems, wash them well
- Boil 1 cup of water in a pot and add traditional lye
- Add the vegetable and cook for 10 minutes while stirring
- Stir well as the lye will cause the mixture to foam
- Add fresh milk and ghee (optional)
- Add chili peppers (optional)

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
How to pick
Vine spinach is available all year round. Harvest it frequently to keep the plant small and bushy.

Ingredients
- Ekabose leaves (*Momordica*)
- Amase leaves
- *Nderema* (vine spinach)
- Groundnut paste
- Traditional lye (*abalang*)

Preparation
- Pluck the leaves from their stems
- Wash the vegetables well
- Mix them and set them aside
- Put traditional lye in a *sufuria* and add salt to taste
- Add the vegetables and boil until all water dries up
- Add groundnut paste, stir well
- Remove and serve with cassava and sorghum ugali (see page 31)
Ethiopian Kale – Kanzira (Khayo)

Brassica carinata

A member of the cabbage family, this plant is characterized by good levels of beta-carotene, calcium, iron and vitamin E, and is a rich source of folic acid and vitamin C. Leaves and tender stems are boiled, pickled, or eaten in salads.

Food Facts

Nutritional value

◊ Iron
◊ Calcium
◊ Vitamins C & E

Credit: Robert v. Blittsedorf, distributed under CC BY-NC License 2.0
How to pick
Ethiopian kale
is available
from March to
December.

ETHIOPIAN KALE

African nightshade cooked in fresh milk

Ingredients

- 4 handfuls of nightshade (*lisutsa*)
- 2 handfuls of Ethiopian kale (*kanzira*)
- 2 handfuls of amaranth (*chimboka*)
- ½ cup of fresh milk

Preparation

- Pluck the leaves from stems of the vegetables and clean them well>
  Shred the *kanzira* finely
- Mix the three vegetables
- Add cold water to the vegetables and boil directly for 5 minutes with the pot covered tightly with banana leaves
- Do not stir while cooking to avoid developing a bitter flavour from the nightshade. The colour of the vegetable turns to brown
- Cook for 20 minutes
- Add salt and fresh milk, stir once and simmer for 5 minutes
- Remove and serve with ugali

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
ETHIOPIAN KALE

Ekadakada mixed with Ethiopian kale

How to pick
Ethiopian kale is available from March to December.

Note
This dish can also be mixed with the wild vegetable ekapulu.

Ingredients
• 1 handful of ekadakada
• 3 bunches of Ethiopian kale
• 1 small sized onion
• 3 cherry tomatoes

Preparation
• Harvest the vegetables and put them in the open air to remove insects
• Wash the vegetables well to remove soil
• Shred/cut the Ethiopian kale finely
• Pluck leaves of ekadakada but do not shred
• Boil the vegetable for 10 minutes in 2 cups of water
• Fry the vegetable in onion and tomato
• Serve with ugali

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Spider plant - Saga (Teso)

Cleome gynandra

This plant has many names in Busia county, including *of saga*, *saga*, *lisaga* and *lisaka*. Spider plant is high in beta-carotene, folic acid, vitamin C and calcium and a good source of vitamin E, iron and oxalic acid. Leaves and shoots are usually boiled or used to prepare soups.

**Nutritional value**

- Calcium
- Vitamins C & E
- Iron
- Folic acid

Credit: [Forest & Kimm Starr](https://www.forestandkimmstarr.com), distributed under CC BY License 3.0
How to preserve
Add sour milk daily when warming to keep the dish longer and to reduce bitterness.

How to prepare

**Ingredients**
- 5 handfuls of *ofsaga* (spider plant)
- 1/2 cup of sour milk

**Preparation**
- Harvest the vegetable and put it in open air to remove insects
- Pluck the leaves from the stems and clean them well
- Boil the vegetables in 2 cups of water for 10 minutes
- Add sour milk and simmer for 5 minutes
- Do not add salt, as it is a bitter vegetable
- Serve with ugali

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Spider plant and amaranth in sour milk sauce

How to preserve
Vegetables can be cooked in large amounts to be eaten for several days. The sour milk can even preserve the vegetable for up to two weeks.

Note
Lisaka is mixed with chimboka to neutralize the bitterness.

Ingredients
- 2 handfuls of chimboka (amaranth)
- 3 handfuls of lisaka (spider plant)
- No salt is added
- Sour milk

Preparation
- Pluck the leaves from stems and wash them well
- Put the mixed vegetables in a pot with enough water, cover to cook
- Don’t stir the vegetables as to avoid developing a bitter flavour
- Cook for 20 minutes, then uncover the pot and add sour milk, stir once
- Do not add salt as it is a bitter vegetable
- Serve the cooked vegetables the following day with ugali

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Wandering Jew - Linyolonyolo (Khayo)
Commelina benghalensis

Food Facts

This wild plant’s young leaves are often eaten as a relish in Kenya. It is also known as ekiliokiti in the Teso language. Linyolonyolo is used medicinally to relieve constipation and rheumatic pain.

Nutritional value

◊ Protein
◊ Fibre
◊ Carbohydrates
◊ Iron

Credit: Dick Culbert, distributed under CC BY License 2.0
**WANDERING JEW**

**Linyolonyolo**

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**How to pick**

*Linyolonyolo* is a wild plant and is available nearly all year round. Pick when the leaves are young for the best flavour.

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**Ingredients**

- *Linyolonyolo*
- *Nderema* (vine spinach)
- *Chimboka* (amaranth)
- *Murere* (jute mallow)
- ¼ cup of traditional lye (*mukherhekha*)

**Preparation**

- Harvest the vegetables and put them on a woven tray to remove insects
- Pluck the leaves from stems, discard the stems
- Wash the vegetables well
- Boil water, add traditional lye
- Add the mixed vegetables and cook for 15 minutes
- Add salt to taste, simmer for 5 minutes
- Remove and serve

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Credit: Atamari, distributed under CC BY-SA License 3.0
WANDERING JEW

Ekiliokiti mixed with cowpea leaves

Note
Linyolonyolo can be mixed with murenda instead of cowpeas. Fresh milk can be added while cooking the vegetables towards the end to improve taste and add nutrients.

Ingredients
- 6 bunches of cowpea leaves
- 4 handfuls of linyolonyolo
- 1/2 cup of traditional lye (abalang)

Preparation
- Harvest the vegetables and put them in open air to remove insects
- Pluck leaves from stalks of both vegetables
- Clean the vegetables well in water to remove the soil
- Boil water and add abalang
- Cook for 15 minutes and stir well so that the vegetables cook evenly
- Add salt to taste, simmer for 2 minutes
- Serve directly or fry with onion and tomatoes to add flavour
Jute mallow - Murenda (Khayo)

Corchorus olitorius

With high levels of beta-carotene, vitamin C, folic acid, calcium and iron, jute mallow (also known as jew’s mallow) is a valuable and versatile indigenous vegetable. In Khayo, it is called either murenda or murere, and the leaves and tender stems are eaten boiled, stewed, stir-fried, or made into soup.

Nutritional value

- Calcium
- Iron
- Vitamin C

Credit: Danny Hunter, BFN Project Global
JUTE MALLOW

Murenda

How to pick
Jute mallow is available all year round.

Note
Murenda can also be mixed with cowpea or mitoo and served with ugali.

Ingredients

- 5 handfuls of jute mallow (murenda)
- 1/2 cup of traditional lye (mukherekha)
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Pluck leaves from the stalks and wash well
- Boil traditional lye in 3 cups of water
- Add the vegetable and cook for 15 minutes (it produces a lot of foam when cooking so uncover the pot a little to keep it from spilling over)
- Add salt to taste, simmer for 3 minutes
- Remove and serve with boiled cassava, sweet potatoes or green banana

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
JUTE MALLOW

Red pepper leaves mixed with murenda

How to pick
Jute mallow is available all year round.

Note
Harvest the red pepper leaves and spread them on a woven tray for 10 minutes to remove insects.

Ingredients
- 6 handfuls of red pepper leaves (ekauleru)
- 3 handfuls of murenda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of traditional lye (abalang)
- 1 small sized onion
- 3 cherry tomatoes

Preparation
- Pluck leaves from the stalks of *murenda*, clean them well
- Pluck the leaves of red pepper and clean them well
- Mix both vegetables (any ratio can be used)
- Boil water in a pot and add *abalang*
- Add the vegetables and cook for 15 minutes while stirring, ensuring that it doesn’t spill over
- Fry the vegetables with onions and tomatoes, add salt to taste and simmer for 3 minutes. Serve with ugali

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
JUTE MALLOW

Okra leaves sauce

How to pick
When the first blossoms appear, harvest one of every three leaves.

Note
The vegetable’s slimy texture is good for treating constipation. This texture is enhanced by using traditional lye.

Ingredients
- 5 handfuls of jute mallow and okra leaves
- 1/2 cup of traditional lye
- Salt to taste

Preparation
- Pluck and wash the leaves well and cut/shred them roughly
- Bring water in a pot to boil and add traditional lye
- Add the vegetables to the boiling lye and cover the pot to cook
- Ensure that the vegetables don’t spill over as it tends to produce foam when cooked with the lye
- Cook for 10 minutes
- Add salt to taste, simmer for 5 minutes
- Remove and serve with ugali

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Redflower ragleaf - Khafululu (Khayo)

*Crassocephalum crepidioides*

This wild plant is eaten for its leaves and is edible raw or cooked. When cooked it is used in soups or stews. The leaves are also used for medicinal purposes, such as for indigestion or headaches. It can be bought commercially or easily cultivated in home gardens, where it thrives in shady areas.

**Nutritional value**
- Vitamin A
- Calcium
- Protein
- Potassium

Credit: DXLINH, distributed under CC BY-SA License 3.0
How to pick
This vegetable is available in the dry season.

How to preserve
This dish can be eaten over several days. Add fresh milk daily them warm to eat.

REDFLOWER RAGLEAF

Khafululu

Ingredients
- 3 handfuls of khafululu
- 3 handfuls of amaranth (dodo)
- 1/2 cup of fresh milk
- Salt to taste

Preparation
- Pluck the leaves from the stalk and wash the leaves well
- Boil water in a pot, add the vegetable mixture to cook for 10 minutes, season to taste
- Add fresh milk to enhance flavour
- Cook for another 10 minutes
- Remove and serve with ugali

Credit: Vengolis, distributed under CC BY-SA License 4.0
Bitter leaf - Mitoo (Samia)

Crotalaria brevidens

Food Facts

This plant is often boiled or fried in oil. To reduce its bitterness, it can be cooked with jute mallow (page 52). In Kenya, bitter leaf is also used medicinally to treat stomach aches, swelling and sore throat. The shoots can be fed to livestock and the seeds to poultry.

Nutritional value

- Calcium
- Fibre
- Vitamin A

Credit: Ks.mini, distributed under CC BY-SA License 3.0
How to preserve
Keep till the following day, just add fresh milk, warm and serve.

Note
It is advisable not to eat a lot of mitoo because it is said to cause chifuk (kidney problems).

BITTER LEAF

Mitoo

Ingredients
• 5 bunches of mitoo
• 1/2 cup of traditional lye (mukherekha)
• 1 cup of fresh milk

Preparation
• Pluck leaves, wash them well and discard the stems
• Mix water and traditional lye and boil
• Add vegetables, cook for 10 minutes, stir
• Add fresh milk and salt to taste, simmer for 5 minutes

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Pumpkin is an important food because most plant parts are edible. In Kenya, it is grown for its tender leaves, fruit and seeds.

**Nutritional value**

◊ Vitamins A & K
◊ Iron
◊ Fibre
How to pick
Harvest the leaves when young and put them on a woven tray to remove insects.

Note
Best when eaten the following day.

PUMPKIN LEAVES

Pumpkin leaves in fresh milk

Ingredients

- 6 handfuls of pumpkin leaves (lisebebe)
- 1/4 cup of traditional lye
- 1 cup of fresh milk

Preparation

- Peel the stems of the pumpkin leaves and wash
- Cut the leaves and the peeled stems roughly
- Boil water in a pot and add lye (mukherkha)
- Add the vegetable to the boiling lye and cook for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally as lye creates foam
- When the water reduces add fresh milk and salt, stir well and simmer for 5 minutes
- Serve with ugali or sweet potatoes

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
PUMPKIN LEAVES

Pumpkin vegetable sauce

Note
Find the traditional lye recipe on page 18 and the groundnut paste recipe on page 112.

Ingredients
- 3 handfuls of Ereng (wild leaves in teso)
- 3 handfuls of pumpkin leaves
- 3 tbsps. of groundnut paste (or sesame paste or fresh milk)
- 1/2 cup of traditional lye (abalang)

Preparation
- Pluck the leaves from the stems and then peel the stems
- Wash the vegetables and cut the pumpkin leaves and stems roughly
- Boil water in a pot and add traditional lye
- Add the leaves to the pot to cook for 15 minutes
- Add groundnut paste
- Season to taste
- Simmer for 5 minutes
- Remove and serve

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Pumpkin Fruit - Liondo (Samia)

Cucurbita moschata

Food Facts

Pumpkin is rich in carotenoids, which help keep the immune system healthy. The fruit’s orange color is due to beta-carotene, an important antioxidant and anti-inflammatory. The high fibre content helps improve bowel health.

Nutritional value

◊ Fibre
◊ Potassium
◊ Zinc

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
PUMPKIN

Boiled pumpkin fruit

Note

Seeds are used to line the pot to prevent the food from burning. The seeds also add a nice taste and should be eaten.

Ingredients

• 1 medium sized pumpkin fruit (*liondo*)

Preparation

• Cut the pumpkin into small cubes (pieces), do not peel the skin
• Wash the pumpkin pieces
• Line the inner bottom of the pot or *sufuria* with pumpkin seeds
• Put the pumpkin pieces in the *sufuria* pot and add 1/2 cup of water
• Cover the pot with banana leaves tightly
• Cook for 20 minutes
• Remove the pot from fire
• Serve with tea

Credit: Dobromila, distributed under CC BY-SA License 4.0
Sirietso

Erythrocoeca bongensis

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya

**Food Facts**

The wild shrub can grow to 3.5 metres tall and besides being a source of food, its strong base is used as wood. It also has traditional medicinal uses.

**Nutritional value**

- Fibre
- Phosphorus
- Calcium

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
SIRIETSO

Sirietsos with sour milk

How to pick
Harvest the vegetables from the wild and put them in the open air to remove insects.

How to preserve
Vegetables can keep for one week because of addition of sour milk.

Ingredients
- Sirietso
- Nasigumba
- Amaranth (lidodo)
- 1 cup of sour milk

Preparation
- Remove the stems and discard them. Wash the leaves well
- Put the mixed vegetables in a pot with water to cook for 10 minutes
- Add sour milk, stir well
- Simmer for 10 minutes, remove and serve the following day
- When ready to be eaten, add sour milk, warm and serve

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Namudokolo

Note
Namudokolo refers to a mixture of many types of vegetables cooked together. It’s the perfect recipe for when you have a small quantity of each vegetable.

Ingredients
- Sirietso
- Sutsa (nightshade)
- Saka (spider plant)
- Kanzira (Ethiopian kale)
- Marika mosi
- Rosemary leaves

Preparation
- Remove the stems and discard them. Wash the leaves well
- Put the mixed vegetables in a pot with water to cook for 10 minutes
- Add a few rosemary leaves for flavour
- Add salt to taste, simmer for 5 minutes
- Remove and serve with ugali

Credit: Lugera (nightshade, left), Forest & Kimm Starr (spider plant, right), distributed under CC BY License 3.0
Sweet Potato leaves - Obumuwo (Samia)

Ipomoea batatas

The leaves of the sweet potato are a great source of nutrients and fibre, and unlike other leafy greens, they take little water to produce. In Teso the plant is called amudokolo or achok.

Food Facts

Nutritional value

- Vitamins A & C
- Iron
- Folic Acid
- Potassium

Credit: Forest & Kimm starr, distributed under CC BY License 3.0
POTATO LEAVES

Sweet potato leaves spiced with groundnut paste

Ingredients

- 6 handfuls of sweet potato leaves (obumuwo)
- 1/4 cup of traditional lye (mukheruka)
- 6 Cherry tomatoes
- 2 tbsps. of groundnut paste

Preparation

- Pluck leaves
- Boil water in a pot and add traditional lye
- Cut the leaves roughly with hands and wash them well
- Add the vegetables to the boiling lye, cook for 10 minutes
- Add groundnut flour and stir well
- Add cherry tomatoes and simmer for 5 minutes before serving

Note
Find the groundnut paste recipe on page 112.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Sweet potato leaves

**Ingredients**

- Sweet potato leaves (*amudokolo* or *achok*)
- 1/2 cup of sour milk

**Preparation**

- Pluck the leaves from the stalks and wash them well
- Dry the leaves in the sun for 10 minutes to remove excess water which causes bitterness
- Put water in a pot to boil, add salt and leaves. Cover to cook
- After cooking for 10 minutes, squeeze the remaining water out and throw it away. This reduces the bitter flavour
- Return the pot with the leaves to the fire
- Add sour milk and boil for 10 minutes
- Serve warm with ugali

**Note**

Sour milk can be replaced with 4 tbsps. of groundnut paste, recipe on page 112.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Cassava leaves - Matawi ya mihogo (Swahili)

Manihot esculenta

Cassava leaves are a good source of nutrients but must be prepared properly to avoid consuming anti-nutrients. Proper cooking includes sun-drying, oven-drying, steaming, shredding and steeping, or a combination of these methods.

Food Facts

Cassava leaves are a good source of nutrients but must be prepared properly to avoid consuming anti-nutrients. Proper cooking includes sun-drying, oven-drying, steaming, shredding and steeping, or a combination of these methods.

Nutritional value

◊ Vitamins A, B & C
◊ Protein
◊ Fibre

Credit: Rasheedrasheed, distributed under CC BY-SA License 4.0
CASSAVA LEAVES

Cassava leaves with groundnut paste

**Note**

Cassava leaves are coarse in texture, so pounding them is important to cut down on cooking time.

**Ingredients**

- Cassava leaves (red stemmed variety)
- 1/2 sour milk or 3 tbsps. of groundnut paste
- Salt to taste

**Preparation**

- Pluck the tender leaves from stalks and shred the leaves by hand
- Put the leaves in a mortar and using a pestle, pound them until soft
- Put the pounded leaves in a pot with boiling water and cook for 20 minutes
- Squeeze out excess water
- Add sour milk or groundnut paste
- Cook for 10 minutes, add salt to taste
- Serve while hot

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
While some varieties of nightshade are toxic, other strains are edible when cultivated and cooked properly, and even provide a good source of nutrients, such as iron, which makes it an especially helpful food for women. In Khayo nightshade is called *lisutsa*. Leaves should be thoroughly boiled to avoid toxicity.
Nightshade cooked in fresh milk

How to pick
Nightshade leaves are available all year round. If consuming the berries, they should be picked and eaten only when completely ripe.

Ingredients
- 4 handfuls of nightshade (lisutsa)
- 2 handfuls amaranth (chimboka)
- 2 handfuls Ethiopian kale (kanzira)
- 1/2 cup of fresh milk

Preparation
- Pluck the leaves from stems of the vegetables
- Clean the vegetables well and shred the kanzira finely
- Mix the three vegetables and put them in cold water
- Boil for 5 minutes with the pot covered tightly with banana leaves
- Do not stir to avoid bitterness
- Cook for 20 minutes, the colour will turn brown
- Add salt and fresh milk, stir once and simmer for 5 minutes
- Remove and serve with ugali

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Goat Head - Esukuro (Khayo)

Tribulus terrestris

Food Facts

This wild plant is eaten for its leaves and fruits, both edible when cooked. It has a number of medicinal properties, including urinary health, glucose intolerance and libido.

Nutritional value

◊ Protein
◊ Calcium
◊ Vitamin C

Credit: Stan Shebs, distributed under CC BY-SA License 3.0
GOAT HEAD LEAVES

Esukuru

Ingredients

- 4 handfuls of *esukuru* leaves
- 1 cup of sour milk

Preparation

- Pluck the leaves from the stalks
- Put sour milk in the pot and place it on the fire, bring to a boil
- Add the *esukuru*
- Stir well and leave it to cook for 15 minutes
- Add salt to taste
- Serve warm with ugali

How to pick
Be sure to avoid the thorns when harvesting this plant!

Credit: Bernard Dupont, distributed under CC BY-SA License 2.0
Cowpea leaves - Kunde (Khayo)

Vigna unguiculata

Available year-round in Kenya, the leaves are a good source of protein and calcium, which are important for muscle strength and bone development. They are called *ebo* in the Teso language and *kunde* in both Khayo and Swahili.

**Nutritional value**

- Iron
- Beta-carotene
- Omega 3 & 6 fatty acids

Credit: [Michasia Dowdy](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0), distributed under CC BY License 3.0
**Ingredients**
- 6 handfuls cowpea leaves
- 5 cherry tomatoes
- ½ cup of traditional lye
- Salt to taste

**Preparation**
- Pluck the leaves from the stalks
- If the leaves are coarse shred them by hand
- Wash the vegetable in water to remove soil and dirt
- Boil 3 cups of water, add traditional lye
- Add the clean vegetable to the boiling lye
- Cook for 10 minutes while covered and stir occasionally so that the vegetable cooks evenly
- Wash and add the cherry tomatoes, cover to cook for 3 minutes
- Add salt to taste, remove and serve with ugali

*Note*
See page 51 for more cowpea recipes.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
COWPEA LEAVES

Aboka mixed vegetable sauce

How to pick
Cowpeas are available from April to September and in November and December.

Ingredients
- Cowpea leaves (*kunde*)
- Bean leaves
- Ethiopian Kale (*kanzira*)
- Amaranth (*chimboka* or *dodo*)

Preparation
- Pluck the leaves from the stems and clean them well
- Line the inner bottom of the pot with fresh banana leaves
- Add the vegetables to the pot (do not cut them)
- Cover the pot with bean leaves then place a plate on top to cover tightly
- Cook the vegetables for 10 minutes then uncover the pot and stir them to cook evenly. They leaves should start sticking together
- Do not add salt
- Remove and serve with ugali

Credit: Harry Rose, distributed under CC BY License 2.0
GROW FOODS

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
The most common breed of cattle in Busia county is the zebu. Beef is often cooked over an open fire and served with ugali, but is also commonly made into a stew. Many parts of the cow are used, including the blood, to make delicious protein-rich meals, important for a healthy diet.

**Nutritional value**

◊ Protein
◊ Fat

Credit: Danny Hunter, BFN Project Global
COW

Emolokony

Ingredients

- Cow leg
- 1 cup of sour milk

Preparation

- Bring water in a pot to a boil
- To clean, put the cow leg into the pot until the hair can be easily removed
- Remove the cow leg from the water and put it on the fireplace to dry
- Split the leg from between the hooves (esipokolo) and put it on the fire, allowing the excessive fat to drip
- Return the cow leg to a boiling pot of water for 2-3 hours (allow more time if there is less fat)
- Cook until all the water dries up, add sour milk before serving

Note
Emolokony means cow leg in the Teso language.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
**Cowpea leaves cooked in blood meal**

**How to pick**
Pluck the cowpea leaves in the evening.

**Note**
When cooking the blood meal, the blood becomes like jelly. Turn it so that it cooks on both sides.

**Ingredients**
- 3 handfuls of cowpea leaves (*kunde*)
- 2 cups of blood
- Traditional lye (*abalang*)
- Salt to taste

**Preparation**
- Harvest the vegetables and wrap them in banana leaves (*akwiyet*) and leave them overnight
- Leave the cow’s blood in a container overnight
- The next day, boil the *kunde* in *abalang* and salt for 10 to 20 minutes, or until well cooked
- To make the blood meal, boil with water and lye
- Add the blood meal to the *kunde*, stir well to mix
- Cook for 10 minutes and serve

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Duck - Bata (Swahili)

Cairina moschata

**Food Facts**

This animal is also known as *liyoyo* in Khayo and *eyoyo* in Samia. Besides being an important source of protein, poultry farming in general is an important source of income for small scale farmers. Ducks in particular are easier to raise than chickens and produce more eggs.

**Nutritional value**

- Protein
- Iron
- Vitamin B
- Zinc

Credit: [Dani](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0), distributed under CC BY License 2.0
**DUCK**

**Duck boiled in traditional lye**

**Ingredients**
- 1 mature duck
- Traditional salt (*mukhebano*)

**Preparation**
- Boil plenty of water in a *sufuria*
- Slaughter the duck by cutting off the neck, and put it immediately in hot water and let it stay for 5-10 minutes while turning to detach the feathers from the skin
- Put the meat on a wire mesh and roast on fire to remove remaining feathers, then split the duck to remove intestines and other inedible parts
- Wash the duck and roast it again to dry it off
- Bring water in a pot to a boil, add the meat to cook for 30 minutes
- Add traditional salt (to improve flavour)

**Note**
This dish is used medicinally as a way to prevent leprosy, itching between fingers, and scabies.

Credit: Atilab, distributed under CC0 BY License 1.0
DUCK

Duck with cherry tomatoes

Note
Leftover broth from cooking the duck can be eaten as a soup for children, served with ugali.

Ingredients
- 1 mature duck
- 6 cherry tomatoes
- 1/2 cup of traditional lye (mukherekha)
- Leafy onion
- 1 tbsp. of ghee
- Salt to taste

Preparation
- Follow instructions on page 85 for preparation
- Clean the cherry tomatoes and add them to the cooking duck
- Add leafy onion, traditional lye and ghee (to add flavour and taste to the final meal)
- Cook for one hour
- Add salt to taste
- Once the duck is cooked all the way through, remove and serve with ugali

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Quail, known as aluru in Teso, is a sweet and delicate white meat with extremely low skin fat and low cholesterol value. It is rich in micronutrients and a wide range of vitamins including the B complex, folate and vitamin E and K. It is therefore recommended for people with who want to maintain a low level of cholesterol.

Food Facts

- Vitamins B, E & K
- Protein
- Fat

Credit: BramtK, distributed under CC BY License 3.0
QUAIL

Fried quail meat

Ingredients

- 5 mature quails (*isindu*)
- 5 cherry tomatoes
- 1 tbsp. of ghee
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Slaughter the bird by cutting off the neck
- Remove feathers by plucking them off
- Split the bird into two
- Dry it over fire (*kusika*) while holding it with a stick
- Boil water in a pot, add salt and the quails, cook for 20 minutes
- Add cherry tomatoes, cook for 5 minutes
- Add ghee as source of oil and flavouring
- Cook for 10 minutes. Remove and serve with ugali

Note

Eating poultry meat and eggs from different species is good for maintaining a diverse and nutritious diet.
Chicken - Akoro (Teso)

Gallus domesticus

Food Facts

Poultry meat is one of the key sources of complete protein in Kenya and is often fried and eaten with ugali, or another starch. In the Luhya community, it is known as *ingokho* and was a delicacy traditionally eaten during special occasions such as dowry ceremonies.

Nutritional value

- Protein
- Fat
- Vitamins B3 and B6
- Phosphorus

Credit: Alessandra Grasso, BFN Project Kenya
**CHICKEN**

*Akoro* Chicken cooked whole

**Ingredients**
- 1 mature chicken
- Oil
- Salt to taste

**Preparation**
- Remove the chicken feathers and intestines and wash well with clean water
- Put oil inside the chicken
- Place the chicken in a cooking pot, cover with water and then cover the pot with fresh banana leaves
- Cook for 45 minutes, turning the chicken from time to time and adding salt to taste
- Serve with ugali

**Note**
This dish is traditionally served in an *achuran*, a bowl used for serving food to an in-law during gatherings.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
**CHICKEN**

*Chicken cooked in sauce*

**Ingredients**
- 1 mature chicken
- 2 tbsps. of ghee
- Traditional salt (*mufume*)
- Salt to taste

**Preparation**
- Roast the bird on fire using a wire mesh
- Remove intestines through the hole next to the tail
- Do not cut the chicken into pieces
- Wash the chicken well with running water and put it in the pot with enough water to cook
- Add a pinch of *mufume*. Also add ghee for flavour through the opening at the tail end
- Put the pot with the chicken, salt and ghee to cook on a low fire
- When cooking, cover the pot using a cork of banana fibres to retain moisture and taste. Cook for one hour and serve with ugali

**Note**
Boiling chicken is a good cooking method when the meat is extra tough to eat.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
CHICKEN EGGS

Boiled eggs (mabuyu mabumbula)

Ingredients

• Chicken eggs
• Salt to taste

Preparation

• Boil the eggs in their shells in clean water
• Boil for 20 minutes
• Remove the eggs from water and let them cool
• Remove the shells and discard
• Season the eggs with salt
• Serve warm with tea

Note
Be sure to cook eggs thoroughly to remove all pathogens.
CHICKEN EGGS

Amabuyu madekhe

**Ingredients**
- Chicken eggs
- Salt to taste

**Preparation**
- Pour the egg contents into a container and beat to mix
- Add water to the beaten eggs and stir
- Add salt to taste, stir
- Pour the mixture into a sufuria to cook with no oil
- Cook for 5 minutes
- This makes a good sauce for the children to eat with ugali

**Note**
Eggs are rich in vitamins and minerals and are a good source of protein.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Guinea fowl - Khanga (Samia)

Numida meleagris

These birds are endemic to Africa and belong to the Galliformes order. They still can be found in the wild, but for hundreds of years they have been reared in many countries throughout the world. Guinea fowl meat is drier and leaner than chicken meat and is rich in vitamins B6 and E, niacin, potassium, calcium and iron. It can be roasted, braised, grilled or pan-fried. Eggs are usually eaten fried or boiled and are particularly tasty.

Credit: Bob, distributed under CC BY License 3.0
Guinea fowl served with ugali

**Note**
Guinea fowl cooks in its own fat, so there is no need to add fat or oil.

**Ingredients**
- 1 mature guinea fowl (*khanga*)
- Pinch of traditional salt (*mufume*)
- Salt to taste

**Preparation**
- Follow instructions on page 91 for preparing the guinea fowl
- When cooking cover the pot using a cork of banana fibres to retain moisture and taste
- Total cooking time is one hour, during which meat will swell
- Serve with ugali

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Rabbit - Eshituyu (Khayo)
Family Leporidae

In Kenya, rabbits are often raised in home gardens, also known as kitchen gardens, an important space for cultivating food to meet household needs. Rabbit is a white meat and thus low in cholesterol and fat, making it a good source of protein for special diets such as those for heart disease ailments.

Food Facts

Nutritional value

◊ Protein
◊ Iron
◊ Zinc
◊ Fat

Credit: Haplochromis, distributed under CC BY-SA License 3.0
RABBIT

Rabbit meat with sauce

**Ingredients**
- 1 mature rabbit
- 1 tbsp. of traditional salt (*mukhebano*)

**Preparation**
- Slaughter the rabbit by cutting off the neck
- Remove the skin and all the intestines
- Hang the meat overnight to dry, or two nights if necessary
- Cut the meat into 4 pieces
- Boil water in a pot, add the meat pieces to cook for 20 minutes
- Add traditional salt to taste
- Add cherry tomatoes, cook for 10 more minutes

*Note*
Spices such as royco, salt, onion and tomatoes can be used to cook rabbit meat to enhance flavour. Adding traditional salt helps break down the little fat present in the meat.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Nile perch - Embuta (Samia)
Lates niloticus

Fish is a good source of unsaturated, healthy fats, and are high in calcium when the bones are consumed. The fish heads should be eaten and are also a very good source of vitamin A, omega-3 fatty acids, iron, zinc and calcium.

Nile perch is not native to Lake Victoria, but is still important to local diets. Native fish are recommended.

Nutritional value

- Protein
- Potassium
- Phosphorus
- Calcium

Credit: Martin Grimm, distributed under CC BY-NC-SA License 2.0
**Smoked Nile perch**

*How to preserve*

Smoked fish can be preserved for one month. Alternatively, fresh Nile perch can be kept in the kitchen roof above the fireplace (dalo) for one day as a means of preservation.

---

**Ingredients**

- Several Nile perch (*embuta*)
- Fire wood
- Wire mesh

**Preparation**

- Put fish on top of a wire mesh over the fireplace
- Cover the fish with banana leaves (*ndakala*)
- Smoke the fish for 12 hours
- After 6 hours turn the fish and cover again for 6 hours to continue smoking

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Tilapia - Awoyot (Teso)

Oreochromis niloticus

The Nile tilapia is rich in vitamins A, D and the B group and is also a good source of micro and macro-elements such as calcium, phosphorus, selenium and manganese. They can be eaten boiled, grilled, roasted or pan-fried. The head of the fish is commonly eaten and is found to be rich in fatty acids such as omega-3, which are crucial in lowering the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

Tilapia is not native to Lake Victoria, but is still important to local diets. Native fish are recommended.

Credit: Kalungi Nathan, distributed under CC BY-SA License 4.0
TILAPIA

Tilapia

Note
Be sure to handle the fish well and to cook it thoroughly to avoid the distribution of pathogens.

Ingredients
• Dried tilapia (awoyot)
• 1 tbsp. of groundnut paste
• Traditional lye (abalang)
• 1 tbsp. of ghee (amori)

Preparation
• Use maize cob (abole) to clean the fish and remove dirt
• Put 1 cup of water in a sufuria or a small pot, add salt and fish
• Cook for 15 minutes until there is only a little bit of broth remaining
• Lightly fry the leafy onion with ghee, add the boiled fish and the broth. Then add abalang to taste, cook for 5 minutes
• Prepare groundnut paste (stir well to make it smooth), then put it in the frying fish and cover
• Cook for 5 more minutes, serve with ugali

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Sardines - Omena (Samia)

Rastrineobola argentea

Omena, or ḳwoyo in Teso and omuneke in Khayo, is a tiny fish mainly harvested at the Lake Victoria, and considered a delicacy among the Luo community. However, other communities in Kenya have embraced it as a main protein dish. It is mainly eaten with ugali.

Food Facts

Omena is a nutritious food source, containing:

- Protein
- Calcium
- Omega 3 & 6 fatty acids

Nutritional value

Credit: USAID Africa Bureau, distributed under CC BY-SA License 2.0
SARDINES

Creamy omena sauce

Note
Omena sauce can be eaten with ugali.

Ingredients

- 1/2 kg tin of dried omena
- 3 tbsps. of groundnut paste
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Sort the omena to remove dirt
- Clean the omena in lukewarm water
- Boil water and add salt to taste
- Add the omena to the boiling salted water to cook for 5 minutes while covered
- Add groundnut paste and stir well
- Simmer for 3 minutes

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
SARDINES

Fresh omena with tomatoes and onions

Ingredients

- 3 cups of fresh sardines (omuneke)
- 7 cherry tomatoes
- 4 spring onions
- 1/4 cup of traditional lye (munyu mukherkha)

Preparation

- Bring 2 cups of water to a boil. Use a sika pot with 2 handles and a cover so that the fish does not break
- Wash the fresh sardines in cold water, then put them in the boiling water, cook for 5 minutes
- Add the spring onions and cherry tomatoes to the cooking fish
- Cook for 30 minutes
- Towards the end, add salt to taste (do not add too early, otherwise the fish will not cook properly)
- Add munyu mukherkha
- Simmer for 3 minutes, then remove and serve with ugali

Note

Traditional lye (munyu mukherkha) is added to reduce the fishy smell of the dish.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
**SARDINES**

**Dried and fried omena**

**Ingredients**
- Dried sardines (*iwoyo*)
- Groundnut flour
- Onion
- Tomato
- Ghee
- Salt to taste

**Preparation**
- Bring water to a low simmer and put it into a basin
- Wash the fresh sardines in the warm water
- Boil them in salted water for 10 minutes
- Remove and fry the sardines in another pot with the onions, tomatoes and ghee. Cook for 10 minutes
- Prepare groundnut flour and make a paste in cold water
- Add the paste to fried omena and stir well to mix
- Simmer for 3 minutes, then remove and serve with ugali

**Note**
Omena is a good source of calcium. Remember, calcium from plants is not as easily absorbed as calcium from animals.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Termites - Chiswa (Khayo)

Macrotermes subhyalinus

Chiswa, also known as mafweterere in Khayo, is a type of edible flying termite with a large abdomen. Among the Luhya community, termites were traditionally eaten by boys after circumcision. In modern practice, this food is relished by the entire family for its nutritional content. Besides protein, termites contain oleic acid necessary for brain functions such as alertness and intelligence.

Food Facts

Chiswa, also known as mafweterere in Khayo, is a type of edible flying termite with a large abdomen. Among the Luhya community, termites were traditionally eaten by boys after circumcision. In modern practice, this food is relished by the entire family for its nutritional content. Besides protein, termites contain oleic acid necessary for brain functions such as alertness and intelligence.

Nutritional value

- Protein
- Vitamins A & C
- Iron
- Calcium

Credit: Tim Cowley, distributed under CC BY-SA License 4.0
TERMITES

Termites

How to pick
Termites are harvested from their mounds. They come out during the early hours of the morning, about 2 to 4 am, from March through May, and in August. A light is used to attract them.

Ingredients
• 1 cup of termites
• Traditional lye (mukherekha)
• 4 pieces of dried mushroom
• 1 tbsp. of groundnut flour

Preparation
• Once harvested, put the insects in a pot and boil for 4 minutes to kill them. Then dry them on a mat or leather for a day
• Rub and blow on the insects to remove wings
• Taste if they are dry. If not, dry the insects again
• Once dry, but the termites into a pot and place over a fire
• Add traditional lye and salt, stir
• Cook for 10 minutes
• Add mushroom, groundnut flour, and cook for 10 more minutes
• Serve with sweet potatoes or cooked banana (maramwa)

Credit: Dick Culbert, distributed under CC BY License 2.0
TERMITES

Termites cooked in sesame sauce

How to preserve
Put the dried termites into a pot covered with dried banana leaves. Hang the pot near a fire place so that the heat continues to dry the insects. In this state, the termites can be kept for up to one year.

Ingredients
• 4 tbsps. of sesame seeds
• 2 cups of dried termites
• Sweet potatoes

Preparation
• Roast the sesame seeds on low fire for 20 minutes
• Mix the insects with the dried sesame seeds
• Put the mixture in a mortar and pound
• Boil sweet potatoes
• Serve the termites with sweet potatoes on a woven platter (esideru)

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
TERMITES

Termites sesame butter spread

Ingredients

- 2 tbsps. of roasted sesame seeds
- 1 tbsp. of roasted groundnuts seeds
- 2 cups of dried termites

Preparation

- Pound the sesame seeds to make sesame butter
- Mix insects, groundnuts, sesame and pound to a paste
- Use the paste as a spread on sweet potatoes or dip the sweet potatoes in the butter and eat
- This spread also makes a good filling

Note

Mafwetera come from a large termite mound called elfwetera or shiswa.

Credit: Kreuzschnabel, distributed under CC BY-SA License 3.0
Also commonly known as the peanut, groundnuts are a good source of plant protein, fats, fibre, and many vitamins and minerals. For this reason, it is a great addition to many dishes you will find throughout this recipe book. It can be made into a sauce, paste or eaten by itself. Bambara groundnuts are especially nutritious.
Roasted Groundnut

How to pick
Harvest groundnuts and dry them in the sun for 2 weeks.

How to preserve
Big seeded groundnuts should be preserved as seeds for the next planting season.

Ingredients
- Groundnuts

Preparation
- Roast groundnuts while still in the pods
- Put sand in a *sufuria* and place it over fire. The sand keeps the groundnut from burning before being properly roasted
- Use a moderate fire and roast for one hour
- Can be served immediately or kept for later use

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
**GROUDBUT**

**Munyaobo (Luhya) Groundnut paste**

**Ingredients**
- 4 cups of groundnuts
- 2 1/2 tspns. of salt

**Preparation**
- Place a saucepan over fire and let it heat up
- Add the groundnuts, salt and 1/2 cup of water
- Cook until the water evaporates as you stir gradually. Nuts will make a popping sound when ready
- Once they pop, turn down the heat and continue stirring until the groundnuts are dry (about 13 minutes)
- Remove from the fire and let them cool
- Using a pestle and mortar, grind the nuts into a paste

Credit: FAO, Kenyan Food Recipes
Pigeon peas are an important source of protein and like other legumes, when eaten with grains, all of the amino acids are provided for a complete protein. Pigeon pea is a great crop for farmers because it provides shade for other crops, returns nutrients to the soil and has other uses besides food: the leaves and husks can be fed to livestock and the wood used to make baskets or for firewood.

**Food Facts**

Nutritional value

- Protein
- Fibre
- Iron
- Vitamin B complex

Credit: [Tau‘olunga](#), distributed under CC BY-SA License 3.0
Pigeon pea sauce

**Ingredients**
- Pigeon peas
- Tomatoes
- Onion

**Preparation**
- Sort the peas and clean them well
- Boil the peas until well cooked
- Fry them in onions and tomatoes to make a sauce
- Serve warm

**Note**
This common legume is often boiled and then mashed (see recipe on page 119) but also makes a nice sauce when fried.
**PIGEON PEA**

**Pigeon pea and maize**

**Ingredients**
- 1/2 kg of green maize grains or white sorghum grains
- 1 kg of dried pigeon peas (*ekimilion*)

**Preparation**
- Sort the peas and clean them well
- Mix the peas with green maize (or alternative)
- Put the mixture in a pot containing water and cook until soft
- Serve warm

*Note*
To make the dried pigeon pea softer when eating, and more digestible, soak them in clean water overnight.

*How to pick*
Pigeon peas are available all year round.
Beans

Phaseolus vulgaris

There are many varieties of beans consumed in Kenya including *lipala*, *rosecoco* and *alulu* (Khayo). *Rosecoco* is the most common variety and is available in most markets. However, it has little tolerance to fungal disease and so it is important that a variety of beans are promoted and sold.

Food Facts

Nutritional value

- Vitamin A
- Fibre
- Iron

Credit: Tiia Monto, distributed under CC BY-SA License 3.0
**BEANS**

**Sitenyi**

---

**How to pick**
Beans can be harvested green or when dry.

**How to preserve**
Dried beans can be stored in a cool, dry place for up to a year.

---

**Ingredients**

- 1 kg of beans (*lipala, rosecoco, alulu types*)
- 1 cup of traditional lye (*mukherekha*)
- Salt to taste

---

**Preparation**

- Clean the beans well and roast them on a pan with a little bit of water. Roast until the water dries up
- Remove the beans from the fire and dry them in the sun
- Rub the beans between hands to remove the bean covers
- Wash the beans well
- Boil the beans in water. When the water is almost gone, add traditional lye. Stir to make a thick porridge
- Add salt, stir, and let simmer for 5 minutes
- Remove and serve with ugali or sweet potatoes

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
**BEANS**

**Omushenye**

---

**Ingredients**

- 1kg of common beans (*rosecoco* type)
- 5 medium sized red sweet potatoes
- 1/2 kg green maize or semi-dry maize

**Preparation**

- Cook the maize for 30 minutes in boiling water
- Add the beans and cook until well done
- Peel the sweet potatoes and add them to the cooking mixture of maize and beans. Cook until soft (when the water has dried up)
- Add salt to taste (optional)
- Lower the heat and stir the mixture well, mashing it until soft and evenly mixed
- Serve warm with tea

---

**Note**

If there is no maize available, beans can be cooked with the sweet potatoes only.

---

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
**BEANS**

**Mukhenye prepared from common beans**

**Ingredients**
- Sweet potatoes
- Beans (*rosecoco* type)

**Preparation**
- Sort the beans to remove dirt then clean them well
- Boil the beans in enough water until well cooked
- Peel the sweet potatoes and clean them well, cut into cubes
- Put the sweet potatoes into the cooking beans, cover to cook
- Cook until soft with some broth remaining
- Pound the mixture until soft and evenly mixed
- Serve warm with tea, porridge or milk

**Note**
Mukhenye is a very filling dish that can relieve constipation given that it is rich in energy and dietary fibre.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Sesame seeds have a high oil content and are an excellent source of many micronutrients like magnesium and copper. They also boast vitamin E and calcium and can be easily added to many dishes.

Food Facts

Sesame - Ikanyim (Teso)

Sesamum indicum

Credit: Dick Culbert, distributed under CC BY License 2.0
SESAME

Ikanyim elumuchi

**Ingredients**
- Sesame grain
- Sour milk

**Preparation**
- Roast sesame grain
- Mill the roasted sesame to flour
- Pour sour milk in sufuria, boil, do not add water
- Add roasted sesame flour
- Add a pinch of salt
- Serve with ugali

Note
In Teso, sesame grain is called *ikanyim*. 

Credit: Jitender Kumar, distributed under CC BY License 2.0
Green grams – Olayo (Samia/Khayo)

Vigna radiata

A member of the legume family, these beans are rich in protein, fiber, antioxidants, magnesium, vitamin B1, B5, B6, manganese and zinc, and an excellent source of folate. In Kenya, they are usually eaten boiled. The sprouts are also often used in a variety of dishes.

Nutritional value

◊ Protein
◊ Fibre
◊ Vitamin B
◊ Magnesium

Credit: Sanjay Acharya, distributed under CC BY-SA License 3.0
GREEN GRAMS

O mushenye prepared from green grams

How to pick
Green grams are available all year round.

Ingredients

• 1kg of green grams (olayo)
• 250 g of sweet potatoes (amabwoni)

Preparation

• Sort the green grams to remove dirt
• Wash the green grams thoroughly
• Boil enough water in a pot for 5 minutes
• Add the green grams and cover. Cook them until well done
• Peel sweet potatoes and wash them well to remove soil
• Add peeled sweet potatoes to the cooking green grams and cover to cook until soft
• Pound the mixture
• Serve warm with porridge and tea

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Mushrooms – Ebale (Teso)

Termitomyces spp.

An excellent source of vitamin B, riboflavin, niacin, pantothenic acid, fresh mushrooms are also a good source of phosphorus. They can be cooked, eaten raw or used to garnish various dishes. Types of edible mushroom include bukhotse and bukukuma which can be cooked fresh.

**Food Facts**

Nutritional value

- Vitamin B
- Riboflavin
- Phosphorus

Credit: Danny Hunter, BFN Project Global
MUSHROOMS

Mushroom (ebale) flavoured with peanut butter

How to preserve
To dry the mushrooms, scrape the soil from the trunk and dry them in the sun for 3 days. Dried mushrooms can keep up to 3 years.

Ingredients
- 3 cups of dried mushrooms
- 1/4 cup of traditional lye
- Peanut butter/raw groundnut flour
- Salt to taste

Preparation
- Sort and soak the dried mushrooms in cold water to remove leftover stuck mud
- With the water last used to clean the mushrooms, bring a pot to a boil. Add the lye and salt then add the mushrooms
- Cook for 20 minutes while covered
- Add 4 tbsps. of peanut butter or raw groundnut flour
- Cook for 10 minutes
- Remove and serve with ugali, boiled sweet potatoes or cooked green banana

Credit: André Karwath, distributed under CC BY-SA License 2.5
MUSHROOMS

Mushrooms with cowpea leaves

Ingredients

- 4 handfuls of cowpea leaves
- 2 cups of dried mushrooms
- Traditional lye (abalang)
- Fresh milk
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Prepare the cowpea by plucking the leaves from the stems
- Wrap the cowpea leaves in banana leaves overnight
- Prepare the traditional lye and put it in a pot with water to boil
- Add the dried mushrooms and salt to the pot and cook for 20 minutes
- Taste the soup to see if there is enough abalang. If not, add more
- Add the cowpea leaves (kunde) and cook for 10 minutes
- Add fresh milk and cook for 5 minutes, remove and serve

Note

Wrapping cowpeas in banana leaves preserves moisture and develops their flavour.
MUSHROOMS

Fresh mushrooms fried in tomato sauce

Note
Not a lot of water is needed when cooking as the mushroom produces a lot of moisture when heated.

Ingredients

- 1 cup of fresh mushrooms (obuoba)
- ½ cup of traditional lye
- 2 tbsps. of ghee
- Salt to taste
- Cherry tomatoes

Preparation

- Remove soil from the mushrooms by cleaning with water
- Cut the mushrooms into smaller pieces
- Wash the mushrooms again
- Boil water in a pot and add the traditional lye
- Add the mushrooms, ghee and cherry tomatoes and cook for 30 minutes
- Remove and serve with ugali

Credit: Magda Ehlers, distributed under CC BY-SA License 4.0
How to pick
After picking mushrooms, shake them to remove the soil. Then cut them and let them dry in the sun for about one week.

Ingredients
- 4 cups of dried mushrooms
- 1/4 cup of traditional lye
- 1 cup of fresh milk
- Salt to taste

Preparation
- Put the mushrooms in cold water to soak for 3 hours
- Wash the mushrooms and throw away the water
- Bring water to a boil and add traditional lye
- Add the mushrooms and cook for 30 minutes
- Add salt to taste and fresh milk
- Simmer for 10 minutes
- Remove and serve

Credit: Glen van Niekerk, distributed under CC BY-SA License 3.0
TRADITIONAL DRINKS
TRADITIONAL DRINKS

Lemon grass tea

Ingredients
- 1 bunch of fresh lemon grass leaves
- Water
- Sugar (optional)

Preparation
- After harvesting the lemon grass leaves, wash them well
- Boil the lemon grass in clean water for 30 minutes to make tea
- Add sugar to taste (optional)
- Serve hot

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
**TRADITIONAL DRINKS**

**Roselle juice made from hibiscus flower**

- **Ingredients**
  - Mature hibiscus flower calyces
  - Warm water
  - Sugar (optional)

- **Preparation**
  - Harvest the mature flower calyces
  - Dry them for 2 days in the shade
  - Soak the calyces in warm water for 1 hour to extract juice
  - Serve the juice immediately or keep for later use

Drinking roselle juice reduces high blood pressure, and is a good source of vitamin C, iron and calcium.

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
Tamarind juice is rich in vitamin C and is a powerful laxative when one is suffering from chronic constipation as it speeds up digestion.

**TRADITIONAL DRINKS**

**Tamarind juice**

**Ingredients**
- Immature tamarind fruits, green in colour (*apeduru*)
- Hot water

**Preparation**
- Soak the fruit pulp in hot water to extract the juice
- Squeeze the juice and sieve it into another container
- From here, it can be mixed with cooking porridge to add flavour. It can also be added to ugali to make a tasty treat for children

Credit: John M. Ndungu, BFN Project Kenya
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## Glossary of terms in local languages

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<th>English</th>
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<td>Teso</td>
<td>A bowl used for serving a whole chicken to an in-law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Akeju kikiteng’</td>
<td>Teso</td>
<td>Cow’s leg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Akoro</td>
<td>Teso</td>
<td>Chicken cooked and served whole</td>
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<td>Aluru</td>
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<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Edible termites</td>
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<td>Dalo</td>
<td>Samia</td>
<td>Section of the kitchen above the fire place where food is stored and preserved using smoke from the fireplace</td>
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<td>Samia</td>
<td>Nile perch</td>
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<td>Esideru</td>
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<td>A woven tray for winnowing grains</td>
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<td>Esifulukho sie enjoju</td>
<td>Samia</td>
<td>Groundnut sauce</td>
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<td>Esikae</td>
<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Bowl used for serving cooked vegetables and when preparing ghee</td>
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<td>Groundnut paste</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Groundnut flour mixed with water to form a paste</td>
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<td>Mud fish</td>
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<td>Ing’eni</td>
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<td>Khayo</td>
<td>To shake the gourd when separating ghee from milk</td>
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<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Edible type of termites</td>
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<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Small pieces of charcoal left after burning charcoal. Provides less amount of heat</td>
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<td>Maramwa</td>
<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Cooked banana</td>
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<td>Matemwa madekhe</td>
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<td>Boiled banana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mbuizi</td>
<td>Swahili</td>
<td>Traditional coconut strainer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mufume</td>
<td>Samia</td>
<td>Traditional salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukhebano/munyu mufume</td>
<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Traditional lye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukherekha</td>
<td>Samia</td>
<td>Traditional lye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munyobo</td>
<td>Luhya</td>
<td>Groundnut paste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munyonyo</td>
<td>Luhya</td>
<td>Dried vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munyu omufume</td>
<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Traditional lye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nalumumba</td>
<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndacala</td>
<td>Samia</td>
<td>Banana leaves used for wrapping food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nungiro</td>
<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Cooking pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obambla</td>
<td>Teso</td>
<td>Sun dried fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obusuma</td>
<td>Samia, Khayo</td>
<td>Ugali (stiff porridge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obusuma bwe matemwa</td>
<td>Samia</td>
<td>Banana ugali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olukherekho</td>
<td>Samia</td>
<td>Traditional container which has holes and an outlet used for filtrating ash into traditional lye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omena</td>
<td>Samia</td>
<td>Sardines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omukongolo</td>
<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Reeds used for preparation of traditional salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omuneke</td>
<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Sardines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rianyi</td>
<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sika</td>
<td>Khayo</td>
<td>A cooking pot with 2 handles and a lid. Used for cooking sardines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sisabo</td>
<td>Khayo</td>
<td>Gourd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>