

Proper handling of baobab fruits at harvest

FACT SHEET

Poor handling of baobab fruits affects the quality of the pulp

The juice made from the pulp of baobab fruit is very healthy, and is often added to porridge and sauces. However, if the fruits are not handled well at harvest, the pulp gets easily spoiled by moisture and insects.



Baobab fruit harvested at maturity has a nice citrus-lemon flavor

Harvest baobab fruit at maturity

Harvesting takes place during the dry season. If fruits are harvested during the wet season, they develop mould. The fruit is ready for harvest when the outer layer is brownish and dry and also when the seeds rattle inside the pod. Harvested at the right maturity, the fruit has a nice citrus-lemon flavor. Immature fruits have an inferior quality and flavor. When baobab pods are damaged, moisture and insects can easily get to the pulp and spoil it.

How to handle baobab fruits at harvest?

Before harvest, make sure to identify baobab fruit from the current season. Avoid old fruits with darker pods. To harvest, use a long pole with a hook attached at the end and avoid climbing up a baobab tree.

Collect only mature fruits that have no damage and are free from any insects. Discard any broken fruit or with holes and only collect whole, undamaged baobab pods.

Collect the pods into clean bags to bring them home. Keep all fruits in small heaps in a clean and well-ventilated place to keep them from getting humid.

Store the fruit outside on a raised place under a simple roof. Spread out the pods as much as possible to avoid dampness. Keep checking the fruits regularly to make sure that termites or other insects do not access them.



By discarding damaged fruits you can store healthy pods for up to 6 months

Turn the pods in the heaps every 2 weeks to avoid the build-up of moisture. If kept well, you can store the pods for up to six months. Once dried and you are ready to sell the baobab fruit pulp, wash your hands before handling the fruit.

Crack open the pods with a clean machete and pull out the dried pulp. Make sure the baobab pods are opened with a clean cut and take out the baobab pulp by hand.

Remove the fibres attached to the seed and place the dried pulp immediately in a clean gunny bag, ready to sell.

Watch a full video on this topic at www.accessagriculture.org or contact one of the people below for more information.

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