TOOLKIT:

Seedbed preparation and sowing (*Ocimum Kilimandscharicum* and Other Crops)

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1

The soil for preparing the seedbed should be finely graded by sieving to remove lumps, sticks, stones, roots or other debris. Stones or debris will make sowing and subsequent germination uneven.

2

The width of the seedbed should not be more than 120cm (48 inches). This width enables easy reach to the centre of the seedbed when weeding, watering or manuring, without stepping on the seedbed.

3

A path of about 1 metre should be left between the seedbeds to allow easy access. The pathways between seedbeds should be slightly sloped to ensure good drainage of water and always kept clean. The slope ensures that water logging does not occur in and around the seedbeds.

4

The seedbed should be prepared by raising the soil about 15cm (6 inches) high and supported on the sides using bricks, timber or poles. This ensures that rain water does not wash away the seedlings but drains away at the sides of the seedbeds.

5

Flatten the seedbed neatly by leveling to avoid the seeds washing down into gullies and dips on the surface

6

Using the edge of a board or a stick, make shallow drills or 'valleys' in the seedbed at a spacing of 6 inches (15 cm).

7

Add a little compost.

8

Because of their size, the Ocimum kilimandscharicum seeds cannot be sown directly to the soil. Take dry soil and work it into powder. Mix dry clean seeds with the dry powdered soil at a proportion of 1 tea spoon full of seeds to I tea cup full of powdered soil.

9

Sow the mixed seeds uniformly in the drills or valleys. Do not cover with soil after sowing.

10

Cover the seed bed with dry mulch using dry grass or dry leaves. The cover ensures protection from birds and direct sunlight, and also improves germination and growth. Water the seedbed.

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