



AVRDC - The World Vegetable Center

Fact Sheet

Saving Seeds of Jute

Production

Native to Africa, jute (*Corchorus* spp.) is now cultivated over a wide range of environments today (Fig. 1). The adaptable plant grows in humid to semi-arid areas throughout the tropics and subtropics. Jute responds especially well to warm, humid weather and is often grown near riverbanks. Jute grows well in many soil types.

Flowering is usually induced by short-day conditions; however, there is diversity among jute species in their daylength requirements for flower induction. Plants become taller and wider during the summer.



Fig. 1. Healthy and vigorous jute plant with seed capsules

Isolation

Jute plants easily cross-pollinate with each other in the open field. Different varieties should be spaced 1000 m apart. Alternatively, varieties can be isolated using net cages. Insects are not necessary for seed reproduction inside the net cage.

Selection

Select plants that are uniform in appearance, healthy and vigorous. Cover flowers before they open to protect them from being contaminated by pollinating insects.

Harvesting

Among the more than 15 species of *Corchorus*, two are most common: *C. olitorius* and *C. capsularis*. The former produces long capsules while the latter produces round capsules (Figs. 2, 3). Both types of capsules are harvested when fully mature but before seeds begin to shatter.



Figs. 2, 3. Popular species *Corchorus olitorius* (top photo) and *C. capsularis* (bottom photo) are closely related, differing mainly in pod shape

Processing

Dry the capsules under shade. The seeds can later be separated from capsules easily.

Storage

Dried seeds can be safely stored for at least three years. Place seeds in jars, manila envelopes, cloth or mesh bags, plastic containers, or foil envelopes. The best containers are air-tight, such as a sealed glass jar, metal can, or foil envelope. Protect seed from sunlight.

Store seeds in a cool (below 15 °C is ideal), dry location. Place the seeds in a refrigerator for long-term storage. For short-term storage, keep the seeds in a cool, shady and dry place.

References

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