



AVRDC - The World Vegetable Center

Fact Sheet

Saving Seeds of Yardlong Bean

Production

Yardlong bean (*Vigna unguiculata* ssp. *sesquipedalis*) grows best under warm temperatures (25–35 °C) and full sunlight. Most varieties are day-neutral plants that flower all year-round.



Fig. 1. Yardlong bean pods

Isolation

Yardlong bean produces perfect, self-pollinating flowers. Cross-pollination by insects is possible but rare as self-pollination occurs before the flower opens (the opening anthers push up against the stigma). Isolation is not necessary.

Selection

At an early stage when pod color and desirable characters can be easily seen, select those healthy plants and mark them for seed production. Rogue out diseased plants.

Harvesting

Allow pods to dry brown before harvesting. The first harvest will be 8–10 weeks after sowing, followed by 2–3 harvests per week during the 6–8 week season. Cut pods with a sharp knife to minimize plant damage. Pods that are harvested 20 days after pollination will give the maximum seed quality.

Processing

Pods are dried in the sun for approximately 3 days (Fig. 2). For small amounts, pods may be opened by hand. For large amounts,



Fig. 2. Yardlong bean pods hung in bundles for drying

hang the pods in a burlap bag and beat them with a stick, or put on the floor and walk on them. Remove large chaff by hand or winnowing. Discard blemished and shriveled seeds. Place remaining seeds under shade for 1–2 weeks for further drying.

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

- Kelly, A.F. and R.A.T. George. 1998. Encyclopaedia of seed production of world crops. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Rashid, M.A. and D.P. Singh. 2000. A manual of seed production in Bangladesh. AVRDC-USAID-Bangladesh Project. Joydebpur, Gazipur, Bangladesh.