

# Croton macrostachyus

# *Euphorbiaceae*

Indigenous

**Common names:** **Arusha:** loyabiyabi, olobiago, ololyapiyapi; **Bena:** lirulugu; **Chag:** ifurufuru, mfurufuru; **Eng:** broad-leaved croton; **Fipa:** mzululwa; **Goro:** meali; **Hehe:** muhugu, muvulugu; **Kuria:** msuju; **Meru:** mfurufuru; **Nyak:** livuluku; **Nyiha:** liwulugu, mkurungu; **Pare:** mfurifuri; **Samb:** mshunduzi; **Zinza:** muhuwa.

**Ecology:** A medium-sized tree of eastern Africa, widespread in areas with high rainfall in forest margins, along roadsides and in Juniperus-Podocarpus habitats. In Tanzania very common around Kilimanjaro, Meru and in Iringa, Mbeya and Rukwa, 1,100-2,500 m.

**Uses:** Firewood, timber, poles, tool handles, medicine (sap, leaves, roots, bark), fodder, bee forage, mulch, green-leaf manure, soil conservation, ceremonies.

**Description:** A deciduous tree, crown rounded and open with large spreading branches to 25 m. **BARK:** pale grey, fairly smooth. **LEAVES:** large, **soft and heart shaped, to 15 cm long, on long stems** crowded at the end of branchlets, veins prominent **with 2 stalked glands** just visible at the leaf base. **FLOWERS:** cream-yellow, **sweetly scented, in erect spikes to 25 cm.** The flower spike turns down as fruits mature. **FRUIT:** **pea-sized capsules on drooping spikes, to 30 cm,** mature capsules split open with a sharp noise to release shiny grey seeds with a soft, cream aril.

**Propagation:** Seedlings, wildings.

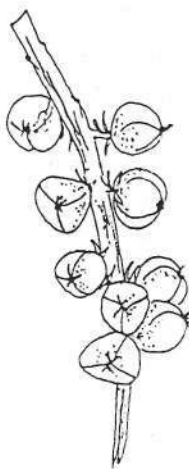
**Seed info.:** No. of seeds per kg: 16,000-27,000. Seed usually damaged by insects while on the tree. Germination is good: 40-70% in 30-60 days.

**treatment:** not necessary; inside of viable seeds must be white-cream coloured. Collect seed from mature grey fruit. Sun dry to release seed.

**storage:** seed will store for some months if kept cool, dry and free from insects.

**Management:** Fairly fast growing on good sites; lopping, pollarding and coppicing.

**Remarks:** Seed and resin are poisonous. When cut it has a rather unpleasant spicy odour. It is a good tree for intercropping. The soft light wood is very perishable and does not make good timber.



fruit capsules

