

About Moringa

The Moringa tree originates from the lower foothills of the Himalaya, but over the centuries has been carried to all tropical parts of the world, where it has become naturalized. Also in Kenya, where it grows in the wild, also in the semi arid regions, like the Coastal provinces of Kenya where Maendeleo's projects are. The tree is drought tolerant and is resistant to most pests and diseases. Because of all the nutritional, medical and other properties of the tree, Moringa is nicknamed the "Wonder Tree", "Miracle Tree", "Tree-of-Life", "Gift from God" and "Mothers Friend".

All parts of the tree are highly nutritious, except the roots. The leaves are loaded with vitamins, minerals and proteins (100% complete protein, all of the essential amino acids). In a gram for gram comparison, the leaves have 4 times the Vitamin A of carrots, 10 times the vitamin A of carrots, 7 times the vitamin C of oranges, 4 times the calcium of milk, 3 times the potassium of banana's, 25 times the iron of spinach and 9 times the protein of yoghurt.



In Ayurveda medicine Moringa is mentioned to cure or prevent around 300 diseases. The paradox of this plant is that it has its natural habitat, grows and thrives in those parts of the world identified as poor, underdeveloped or developing. For that reason Moringa is embraced by many charity



organizations active in those countries, and made an important component in health programs, to fight malnutrition and address micro nutrient deficiency. It can be an essential meal component for nutrition during a child's first 1000 days, so crucial for its physical and cognitive development. It is also important for pregnant and lactating women and HIV positive persons, to boost and enrich their milk production and their immunity.

The leaves of Moringa can be eaten raw, cooked as spinach or in fresh salads, but can also be dried and made into powder (conversion is 7 grams of fresh leaves give 1 gram of powder). Moringa leaves retain their nutrient content if dried properly. Given the monotonous diet of the Port Reitz school – ugali (maize) with beans or rice with beans -- and few fresh vegetables, Maendeleo supplies Moringa powder to be added in with the meals, as a natural vitamins and minerals supplement.

Maendeleo purchases Moringa powder from the Kenya Care Self help groups, who collect the leaves from Moringa trees growing in the wild, providing them with some income.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DxCbyoYl1Og>