

# MOLES SEEDS

## Borecole (Kale)

Cultural Leaflet: ZZ524

Kale is a much more accommodating crop than other brassicas, being low maintenance and offering a steady supply of winter greens through to spring. It is very hardy, tolerates a lightly shaded position and cold weather – indeed a frost will improve the flavour. It is also relatively free of pests and diseases but for best results, keep the area weed free and remove any yellowing leaves. In dry weather, you should keep the soil consistently moist.

It has a reputation for being bitter and rather tough but harvesting little and often, when the leaves are young and tender, avoids this.

Kale is ideal for bunching and leaf sales, and as a game cover crop. It can also be used as a feed for sheep and cattle when the quality and availability of grass declines. Containing a high crude protein content, harvest the plants when they are leafy to provide an extra boost to milk yields.

For the purposes of retail plant sales, sow April to June and prick seedlings out into cell trays.

### Varieties

Moles Seeds sell both the curly and strap-leafed varieties. Black Tuscany is ever popular for being well flavoured and hardy, also Black Magic, an improved Cavalo Nero with better uniformity, bolting resistance and cold tolerance. Curly kale varieties include F1 Kapitan, an excellent hybrid with good tolerance of low temperatures and Scarlet, whose leaf colour is intensified by the cold to an attractive violet blue, and is good for baby leaf production.

### Propagation and Growing-on

Sow either direct or in modules mid-May-July. Kale germinates between 10-25°C. Sow at 250-500g per hectare for a transplanted crop, or around 2 kilos per hectare for direct drilled crop. Final plant spacings are approx 50 x 50cm. Harvest from October onwards, either whole heads or pick leaves individually for bagging.

### Pest and Disease

Kale has minimal pest and disease issues the crop does benefit from being netted against birds.

*Information provided for guidance only, as cultural practices and climatic circumstances vary.*

(12/15)

