

Mountain Pepper leaves

Tasmannia lanceolata



Probable Aboriginal names

mer.ry.de (Bruny I s.), tab.boo (Northern Tas).

There are a small number of cultivated Mountain Pepper crops in Southern Australia. The majority of leaves are harvested from the wild in Tasmania, the Victorian Alps and NSW. **NOTE: Horticultural plant production should be based on plant selections with good form, higher levels of the active compound polygodial and low safrole content.**

Description and Use

Leaves are traded as whole dried or dried & ground or whole fresh frozen. The leaves can be used as for regular peppercorns but the heat is more intense. For ground leaves, larger particle sizes can be used to provide visibility as well as flavour in processed foods.

Quality requirements

- Leaves should be dried in the dark away from direct sunlight as soon as possible after harvest.
- Inadequate drying of leaves can lead to mould development.
- Leaf colour deteriorates with time especially in sunlight.
- Insect damage in leaves is not acceptable.
- All foreign matter should be removed before processing.



Post harvest handling

- Dry the leaves to 5% moisture and store in the dark at 8°C.
- Dried leaves should be milled to customer requirements, preferably within 1 month of sale.
- In cooler climates sun drying can be inadequate. Dry with air flow of ca. 35° for up to 4 days depending on equipment and volumes.
- Fresh leaves can be stored at low temperature (2°C) for up to 1 month.
- Quality of fresh leaves after freezing diminishes (smaller softer leaves can blacken on thawing)
- Store sealed hygienically in food grade polyethylene bags or sealed plastic containers. Better storage and shipping performance can be obtained from polyester or metallized polyester (112 micron) bags.
- Packaged product should preferably be labelled with common and botanical names, date, area of harvest and harvester details.
- Foods Standards Australia New Zealand <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/> has information related to food standards and food safety (see Guide to the new Food Standards Code).
- If microbiological testing of produce is required, contact the local state authority (e.g. Department of Health) for guidance on accessing test laboratories.



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