

Mountain Pepper Berries

Tasmannia lanceolata

Probable Aboriginal names

mer.ry.de (Bruny Is.) tab.booo (Northern Tas.)



There are a small number of cultivated Mountain Pepper crops in Southern Australia. The majority of Mountain Pepper berries are harvested from the wild in Tasmania, Victorian Alps and NSW. Berries are only obtained from female plants.

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

Ripe berries should be a dark purple-black in colour. Berries are traded as dried, whole or dried & ground. A small market exists for fresh and frozen berries. The berries can be used as for regular peppercorns but the heat is more intense.

Quality requirements

- Berries hold their colour and taste characteristics well when thawed
- Inadequate drying can lead to mould problems in storage
- Berries can suffer from insect attack but this is not common
- No foreign matter should be present in the final packaged product.



Postharvest handling

- Fresh berries should be chilled as soon as possible, cleaned before freezing and sorted for size if required. Drying should commence as soon as possible.
- In cooler climates, sun drying can be inadequate. Dry with flow of air of approx. 35°-40°C for up to 4 days depending on equipment and volumes.
- Dry the berries to less than 5% moisture and store cool and dark, below 8°C.
- Dried berries should be milled to customer requirements, preferably within 1 month of sale.
- Frozen berries may be stored at low temperature (freezer -20°C) for up to 12 months.
- 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.



Industry participants are thanked for their assistance in the preparation of this information sheet

Disclaimer: To the extent permitted by law, the agencies & institutions named above (including their employees and consultants) exclude all liability to any person for any consequences, including but not limited to all losses, damages, costs, expenses and any other compensation, arising directly or indirectly from using this publication (in part or in whole) and any information or material contained in it.

