



Kamokamo: harvest and storage

He kai kei aku ringa – There is food at the ends of my hands

FURTHER INFORMATION //

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KINDLY SUPPORTED BY //



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FRUIT SELECTION

The small, light coloured (immature) fruit are preferred by Māori as they are sweeter and more flavoursome than the older fruit. These fruit are picked and eaten immediately or given away.

HARVEST

Kamokamo fruit are harvested from the vine using a knife or by twisting, pulling or snapping the fruit stalk from the main vine. Ensure some of the stalk is left on the fruit, as this will help to prevent crown rot. Avoid bruising or damaging the fruit, as this may encourage rot during storage.



Round kamokamo fruit ready for harvest

The tendrils can be picked at any time during the season. Male flowers can be picked early in the season and both male and female flowers nearer to the end of the season.

STORAGE

Kamokamo should be stored in a dry, sheltered, dark place with good airflow. The tougher skinned or deep-ribbed kamokamo varieties are best for longer storage as these are thought to be more resistant to rot and insect damage. Use as required.

In Kaikohe, the traditional Māori practice of storing kai (food) with Wheki (*Dicksonia squarrosa*) leaves to protect from pests is still used to store kamokamo.

VINE DISPOSAL

Composting the vine at the end of the season is common practice; the vine can either be left to decompose at the growing site or cut into small pieces and added to the compost heap, or grazed by stock or pigs. Remove the vine from the growing site if powdery mildew is present, as this may increase the possibility of re-infection in the next growing season.