

Mexico

Common names: **English:** Sisal **Luganda:** Kigoogwa.

Ecology: Grows on a wide range of soils from sandy loam to clay, withstands waterlogging and is drought hardy. In Uganda it has been grown as a plantation crop around Butiaba old pier and Masindi Port. Sisal is also commonly planted for live fencing throughout the country.

Uses: Firewood (flowering stem), live fence, strong ropes, sacking, mats (fibres).

Description: A woody herb with whorls of spiny leaves at ground level. The flowering stem reaches up to 6 m. **LEAVES: sword-shaped, to 2 m long**, edges spiny, with a **sharp dark brown tip**. **FLOWERS: a flowering "pole" has small "green-yellow flowers** on side branches. **FRUIT:** dry capsules with seed but little is viable. Some flower buds become thick and hard and will root when planted. They are called **"bulbils"** and may **develop among the flowers**. Suckers are produced at the base of the leaves.

Propagation: Suckers and bulbils.

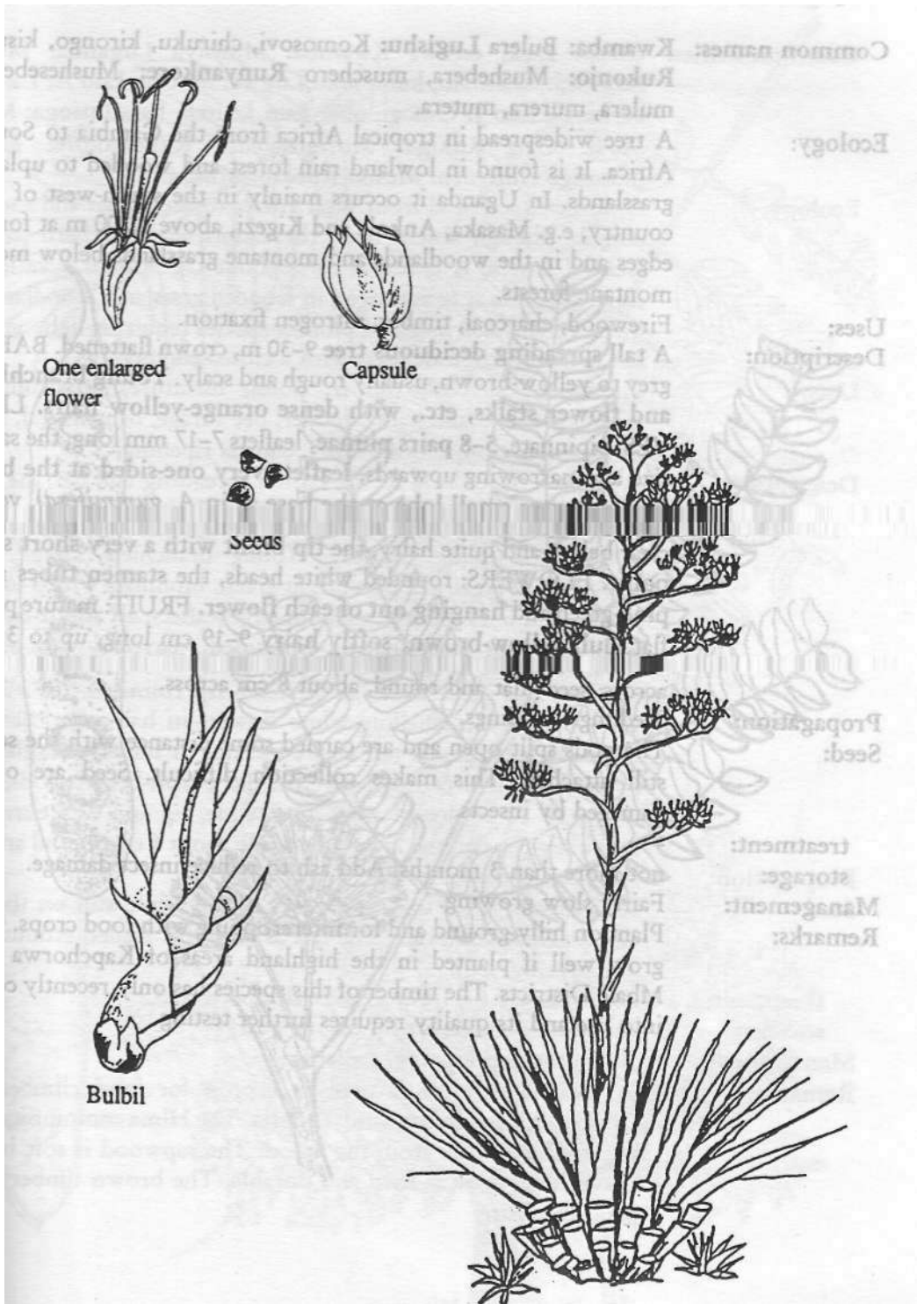
Seed: Little viable seed.

treatment:

storage:

Management: Cut the large leaves to grow a suitable hedge. Fast growing.

Remarks: Drought hardy and termite resistant. The whole plant dies after flowering, which normally occurs at the age of seven years. Leaves for fibres can be cut after about two years.



One enlarged flower

Capsule

seeds

Bulbil