

## Alphabetical List of Vernacular Names of Vetiver\*

The present list of vernacular names of vetiver is compiled by the author from various sources whose origins are too numerous to mention in this archive. In most cases, they have been rechecked by the scientists of the countries of origin, although some may still be wrong in their spelling, especially for non-romanized languages where there is no standard system of transcription of local languages into Roman letters; thus a given name may be written in many different spellings. Although every attempt has been made to obtain as much as possible all vernacular names used in all vetiver-growing countries, the present list is still far from complete. Thus, readers are requested to send in their contributions for additional names, especially those used by the minority people in different dialects, or in countries/dialects which are still missing, in order to make the list as complete as possible.

The list below gives the name of the country (in *bold italics*) where vetiver is grown or known to exist. Vernacular names are given after the language or dialect, which is written in *italics*. All names are arranged in alphabetical order. Vernacular name(s) most commonly used in a given country is/are underlined. To make the list of vernacular names uniform, the first letter of every word of all vernacular names is capitalized as if it were a proper noun. This is to avoid confusion with ordinary words. A comma (,) is used to separate vernacular names. Compound names are not hyphenated, but written as two or more words, e.g. Gondha Bena, Khus Khus, Xiang Geng Chao, Vala Khas Khas.

### ***Argentina:***

*Spanish:* Capia

### ***Bangladesh:***

*Bengali:* Bangla, Benna Shoba, Binna Sopha, Ghonda Bena, Gondha Bena, Ecorban, Ecorbon,  
Khus Khus

### ***Brazil:***

*Portuguese:* Capim de Cheiro, Capim Vetiver, Grama Cheirosa, Gram das Indias, Patcholi

### ***China:***

*Cantonese:* Hang Gen Chao (the word 'chao' is spelled 'cao' by some authors, but pronounced 'chao')

*Mandarin:* Xiang Gen Chao

### ***El Salvador***

*Spanish:* Zacate Violeta

### ***Ethiopia:***

*Amharic:* Yesero Mekelakeya

Menschen Grass (named after Menschen für Menschen the NGO that introduced vetiver to small farmers in Mettu area in the 1990s)

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\* *By Narong Chomchalow, published in Vibrant Versatile Vetiver, Special Bulletin No. 2003/1, Pacific Rim Vetiver Network, on pages 37-43.*

**Fiji:** *English:* *Vetiver*

**France:**

*French:* Chiendent des Indes, Chiendent Odorant, Gras Vetiver, Herbe Vetiver, Vetivert

**Ghana:**

*Dagomba:* Kulikarili

**Guatemala:**

*Spanish:* Pachuli, Pasto Violeta

**India:**

*Ayurvedic:* Ushira

*Bangla:* Khas, Khas Khas, Khus\*, Khus Khus

*Gujarati:* Valo

*Hindi:* Bala, Balah, Bena, Ganrar, Khas, Khas Khas, Khus Khus, Onei, Panni

*Kannada:* Hallu, Kaadu, Kaddu, Karidappasajje Hallu, Laamancha, Laamanche, Lavancha, Vattiveeru

*Malayalam:* Ramaccham, Ramachehamver, Vettiveru

*Marathi:* Vala, Vala Khas Khas

*Mundari:* Birnijono, Sirum, Sirumjon

*Oudh:* Tin

*Panjabi:* Panni

*Sadani:* Birni

*Sanskrit:* Abhaya, Amrinata, Bala, Lamaja, Lamajjaka, Reshira, Sugandhimulu, Usira, Ushira, Virana

*Santhali:* Sirom

*Telugu:* Ayurugaddiveru, Kuruveeru, Lamajja Kamuveru, Vettiveellu, Vattiveeru, Vettiveerum, Vidavaliveru

*Tamil:* Ilamichamver, Vattiver, Vettiver, Vettiveru, Vilhalver, Viranam, Virkal, Vujal

*Urdu:* Khas

*Unknown:* Sita Mulaks (used in Ayurvedic medicine to mean ‘having cool roots’), Sugandhi Mulaka (also in Ayurvedic medicine to mean ‘sweet smelling root’)

\* where spelled as *Khus*, the u is to be pronounced just to separate kh and s without any voice for u

**Indonesia:**

*Bahasa:* Agar Wangi, Lara Setu, Lara Westu, Rara Weatu, Rumpu Wangi

*Batak:* Hapias

*Bugis:* Sere Ambong

*Buol:* Akadu

*Gayo:* Useur

*Gorontalo:* Tahele

*Halmahera:* Babu Wamendi

*Jawa:* Lara Setu

*Madura:* Kara Bistu

*Minagkabau:* Urek Usa

*Roti:* Nausina Fuik

*Sundanese:* Janur, Nara Wastu, Usar

*Ternate:* Garama Kusu Batawi

*Tidore:* Barama Kusu Butai

***Iran:***

*Persian:* Bikhiwala, Khas

***Laos:***

*Laotian:* Ya Faek

***Latin America (see also individual countries):***

*Spanish:* Capia, Mora, Pasto Vetiver, Tiva, Zacate Valeriana, Zacate Vetiver, Zacate Violet(t)a

*Portuguese:* Pacholi, Pachuli

***Malaysia:***

*Bahasa:* Akar Wangi, Kusu Kusu, Naga Setu, Nara Setu, Nara Wastu, Rumpu Wangi

***Myanmar:***

*Myanmese:* Myat Myit Hmway

***Nepal:***

*Nepalese:* **Kas, Khas Khas**

***Nigeria (and North African countries across sub-Saharan belt):***

*Fulani:* Chor'dor'de, Ngongonari, So'dornde, So'mayo, Zemako

*Hausa:* Jema

***Pakistan:***

*Arabic:* Khas

*Urdu:* Aseer, Daron, Khas

***(Amazonian) Peru:***

*Portuguese:* Pachuli (a name adopted from neighboring Brazil)

***Philippines:***

*Official name in the Philippines:* Moras

*Bikol:* Mora, Rimoras

*Bisaya:* Mora, Moras, Mura, Rimodas, Tres Moras

*Cebu-Central Bisaya:* Amoor, Muda

*Iloko:* Amoras, Anis de Moro

*Pampango:* Anias de Moras, Ilib

*Panay Bisaya:* Giron, Rimodas

*Sambali:* Rimora

*Spanish:* Raiz de Moras

*Sulu:* Narawasta

*Tagalog:* Moras, Moro

***Portugal:***

*Portuguese:* Capim de Boma, Capim Vetiver

***Puerto Rico:***

*Spanish:* Baul de Pobre, Pacholi

***Sahel (Region in north-central Africa, south of the Sahara):***

*Bambara:* Babin, Ngoka Ba, Ngongon

*Fulani:* Dimi, Kieli, Pallol

*Gurma:* Kulkadere  
*Mossi:* Roudoum  
*Sarakolle:* Kamare  
*Songhai:* Diri

***Senegal:***

*Bamabara:* Khamara  
*Fulani:* Toul  
*Poulaar:* Sodorde  
*Tukulor:* Semban  
*Wolof:* Sep, Sepp, Tiep

***Sierra Leone:***

*Mende:* Pindi  
*Susu:* Barewali  
*Temne:* An-wunga Ro-gban

***South Africa:***

*Zulu:* Muskus

***Spain:***

*Spanish:* Grama de la India

***Sri Lanka:***

*Sinhalese:* Saivandera, Savandara, Savandramul

***St. Vincent:***

*English:* Khus Khus (originated from South Asian dialects, viz. Bengali, Hindi, or Urdu)

***Tanzania:***

*Kiswahili:* Vetiva

***Togo:***

*Dagomba:* Kulikarili

***Thailand:***

*Vetiveria zizanioides:*

*Central and Nakhon Ratchasima:* Ya Faek Hom, Ya Faek, Ya Khom Faek

*Central:* Faek Lum, Faek Hom, Ya Faek, Ya Khom Faek,

*General (all over the country):* Faek

*Kamphaeng Phet:* Faek Ko Takhrail, Saeng Mong

*Karen-Mae Sariang:* Po Sia Khi

*Nakhon Phanom:* Faek Som, Faek Tham

*Northeastern:* Kaeng Hom, Khaem Hom

*Vetiveria nemoralis:*

***Central:* Faek Don**

*Chiang Mai:* Ya Faek

***Venezuela:***

*Spanish:* Petiver

***Vietnam:***

*Vietnamese:* Huong Bai, Huong Lau

*Note:* According to Ken Crismier <kencrismier@gte.net>, these two terms are not vetiver, but other wild grasses. However, according to Paul Truong <truong@uqconnect.net.au>, these two vernacular names are applied for native species of vetiver, *Vetiveria nemoralis*, while the one popularly used for soil and water conservation, *V. zizanioides*, which was recently introduced, is known in Vietnam under the English common name, ‘vetiver’.

**It is interesting to note the following:**

1. Names that signify *fragrance/fragrant* of the root of *V. zizanioides* are:

*Bhasa (Indonesia and Malaysia):* ‘Wangi’ means fragrant, as in ‘Akar Wangi’ which means fragrant root, and ‘Ramput Wangi’ which means fragrant grass.

*Thai:* ‘Hom’ means fragrant, as in ‘Faek Hom’ which means fragrant vetiver, and ‘Ya Faek Hom’ which means fragrant vetiver grass.

*Cantonese:* ‘Hang’ means fragrant, as in ‘Hang Gen Chao’ which means grass with fragrant root (‘Gen’ means root, and ‘Chao’ means grass).

*Mandarin:* ‘Xiang’ means fragrant, as in ‘Xiang Gen Chao’ which means grass with fragrant root (‘Gen’ means root, and ‘Chao’ means grass).

*Portuguese:* ‘Cheirosa’ means fragrant, as in ‘Grama Cheirosa’ (as used in Brazil)

*Sanskrit and Hindi:* ‘Sugandhimula’ i.e. ‘Sugandhi + mula’ means pleasing smell / fragrant + root (as used in Hindi and Sanskrit in India)

2. Names that signify being a *grass* are:

*Bhasa (Indonesia and Malaysia):* ‘Rumput’, as in ‘Rumput Wangi’, meaning fragrant grass.

*Cantonese:* ‘Chao’, as in ‘Hang Gen Chao’, meaning grass with fragrant root.

*Laotian:* ‘Ya’, as in ‘Ya Faek’ meaning vetiver grass.

*Mandarin:* ‘Chao’, as in ‘Xiang Gen Chao’, meaning grass with fragrant root.

*Spanish:* ‘Zacate’, as in ‘Zacate Valeriana’, ‘Zacate Vetiver’, ‘Zacate Violeta’.

*Portuguese:* ‘Capim’, as in ‘Capim Vetiver’ (as used in Brazil), meaning vetiver grass; ‘Capim de Cheiro’ (as used in Brazil), meaning perfume grass.

‘Gram’, as in ‘Gram das Indias’ (as used in Brazil), meaning grass of the Indies;

‘Grama’ as in ‘Grama Cheirosa’ (as used in Brazil), meaning fragrant grass

*Thai:* ‘Ya’, as in ‘Ya Faek’, meaning vetiver grass; ‘Ya Faek Hom’, meaning fragrant vetiver grass; ‘Ya Khom Faek’, meaning vetiver grass with sharp-edged leaves.

*Vietnamese:* ‘Huong’, as in ‘Huong Bai’ and ‘Huong Lau’, meaning vetiver grass.

*Sanskrit:* *Kush / Kusa* – this has become *Khus* in Hindi / Urdu, and other allied Indian languages.

3. Names that signify being a *root* are:

*Cantonese:* ‘Gen’, as in ‘Hang Gen Chao’, meaning grass with fragrant root

*Mandarin:* ‘Gen’ as in ‘Xiang Gen Chao’, meaning grass with fragrant root

*Spanish:* ‘Raiz’, as in ‘Raiz de Moras’ (as used in the Philippines), meaning root of Mora (the mulberry or something that color)

*Sanskrit / Hindi:* Mula / Mulak

4. Same dialects/languages used in different countries:

*Bahasa:*

**Indonesia:** Agar Wangi, Lara Setu, Lara Westu, Rara Weatu, Rumput Wangi

**Malaysia:** Akar Wangi, Kusu Kusu, Naga Setu, Nara Setu, Nara Wastu, Rumpu Wangi

*Bangla:*

**Bangladesh:** Bangla, Benna Shoba, Binna Sopha, Ghonda Bena, Gondha Bena, Ecorban, Ecorbon, Khus Khus

**India:** Khas, Khas Khas, Khus, Khus Khus

*Dagomba:*

**Ghana:** Kulikarili

**Togo:** Kulikarili

*Fulani:*

**Nigeria:** Chor'dor'de, Ngongonari, So'dornde, So'mayo, Zemako

**Sahel:** Dimi, Kieli, Pallol

**Senegal:** Toul

*Thai/Laotian (both languages are similar):*

**Laos:** Ya Faek

**Thailand:** Ya Faek, Ya Khom Faek, Faek Hom, Faek Don, Faek Lum

*Urdu:*

**India:** Khas

**Pakistan:** Khas

5. Same names in different *dialects* in different *countries*:

Khas / Khas Khas (both are used interchangeably)

*Arabic (Pakistan)*

*Bangla (India and Bangladesh)*

*Hindi (India)*

*Marathi: (India)*

*Persian (Iran)*

*Urdu (India and Pakistan)*

*Nepalese (Nepal)*

6. It is rather strange that the original Tamil word, 'vettiver' (meaning a coarse grass), in which the English common name, 'vetiver', and the generic name, *Vetiveria*, are derived, is not as popularly used as the other South Asian (North India in particular) words, namely Khas, Khas Khas, Khus, and Khus Khus.