PLANT FACT SHEET

Astrocaryum aculeatum G. Mey.

GENUS *Astrocaryum* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Tukum palm, Awara palm

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Palm hearts, Leaves - salt, Vegetable, Seeds

The flesh of the fruit is eaten fresh.
The leaves are burnt to make vegetable salt.
The soft spongy layer of germinated seeds is eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A single stemmed, spiny palm. It can form clusters. It can have up to 5 trunks together. It has a slender grey trunk. It grows to 25 m high and is 20-30 cm across. The crown is almost round. It has feather-like leaves. They are bright green. The leaves are about 5 m long and finely divided. The leaflets are arranged in groups. There are black spines on the trunk, leaf stalks and midrib of the leaves. The fruiting stalks are 2 m long. They have branches. The flowers are cream. The fruit occur in clusters. They are oval and 4-5 cm across. They are yellowish-orange when ripe. They are edible.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It usually grows in deforested areas. It grows in dry forests in the Amazon in Brazil. It grows in the understorey in lowland rainforest. It grows on non flooded soils below about 650 m elevation.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seed are often difficult to germinate. Soaking or cracking the seed helps germination.

NOTES

There are about 40-50 Astrocaryum species. The fruit are very rich in Vitamin A. The kernels contain 23% fat.

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