PLANT FACT SHEET

Vitex cymosa Bertero ex Spreng.

GENUS *Vitex* **FAMILY** Lamiaceae

COMMON NAMES Cymose chaste tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Flowers - tea

The ripe fruit are eaten fresh. They are also used for marmalade.
The flowers are used to make tea.

DESCRIPTION

A tree. It grows 10-20 m high. The crown has a lot of leaves. The trunk is short and 50-90 cm across. The leaves are compound with leaflets spread out like fingers on a hand. The leaf stalks are 6-8 cm long. There are 5-7 leaflets of unequal size. The 2 near the base are smaller and 4-7 cm long while the others are 8-12 cm long. The flowers are in the axils of leaves. They are in groups 3-6 cm long and are purple. The fruit is round and fleshy. It is red or purple when ripe. It only has one seed.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows naturally in gallery forest in the Amazon in central Brazil. It grows in tropical lowlands. In Argentina it grows below 500 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. The ripe fruit are harvested and put into plastic bags until they soften. The seeds are removed and washed under running water. Fresh seed are planted and they germinate in 60-70 days.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants grow at a moderate rate.

NOTES

Also put in the family Verbenaceae.

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NYBG herbarium "edible"

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