PLANT FACT SHEET

Sterculia urens Roxb.

GENUS *Sterculia* **FAMILY** Malvaceae

COMMON NAMES Indian Tragacanth, Karaya pejuh tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Gum, Roots, Seeds-coffee

The tender roots are cut into small pieces, then boiled and mixed with spices or sugar.
The seeds are dried and used as a pulse. They are also roasted and eaten. The roasted seeds are used as a coffee substitute.
The seeds yield an edible oil.
The Karaya gum from the bark is used in making jam and confectionary. It is used to thicken ice cream.

DESCRIPTION

A medium sized tree. It grows to 10 m tall. It loses its leaves during the year. The bark is white or pink and papery. The leaves are large and have pointed 5 lobes. They are soft and velvety. They are 30-45 cm long. The stalk is as long as the leaf. The flowers are green or yellow with a purple throat. They are star shaped. They are strong smelling and sticky. They occur in clusters. The fruit consist of 5 boat shaped woody fruitlets from one flower. They are crimson velvet when young. They turn woody brown when old. The hairs are bristly and stinging. The seed are black.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. They grow on rocky exposures. It grows between 300-705 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The fruit are available December to May in India.

NOTES

Also put in the family Sterculiaceae.

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