PLANT FACT SHEET

Use with caution

This plant can be harmful if it is eaten raw, in large amounts or without the right preparation. Read the whole fact sheet before use.

Encephalartos transvenosus Stapf. & Burtt. Davy

GENUS *Encephalartos* **FAMILY** Zamiaceae

COMMON NAMES Modjadji cycad

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flesh around Seeds

The fully ripe flesh around the seeds is eaten, especially by children.
The stem is cut into slices and buried until it becomes partly fermented then it is sliced and sun dried before crushing into flour. This is eaten after boiling.
CAUTION: The seed kernel is poisonous.

DESCRIPTION

A tall plant. It grows to 12 m tall. The trunk is thick and scarred. It has a netted pattern. The crown is made up of shiny straight leaves. The leaves are spiny and up to 2.4 m long. The leaflets are broad; the middle one being 3 cm wide. They are often slightly curved and have teeth along the edges. The fruit occur as cones. 2 to 4 cones occur together. They are large and the female cones are the biggest. They can be 80 cm long and weigh 34 kg, They occur in the heart of the big green leaves. The seed are orange red. The thin fully ripe flesh around the seed is edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in the mountains in South Africa. It grows in forests and on hillsides. In South Africa it grows in regions with warm to hot summers and mild but frost free winters. It grows between 600-1000 m altitude. The rainfall is 500-1000 mm with a summer maximum.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seed germinate easily. Plants can be grown from suckers. Suckers transplant easily.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows quickly. It can produce seeds 11 years after planting from seed.

NOTES

There are 52 Encephalartos species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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