



PLANT FACT SHEET

Coffea canephora Pierre ex Froehner

GENUS *Coffea* FAMILY Rubiaceae

COMMON NAMES Coffee (Robusta)

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds - drink, Fruit, Spice

The seeds are used for coffee. They are roasted.
In some places the fruit are lightly boiled then chewed.

DESCRIPTION

A larger tree than Arabica coffee. It is an evergreen shrub. It grows to 10 m tall and has thicker, larger leaves. It is shallow rooted with most feeding in the top 12 cm of soil. In heavy shade, trees have a more developed trunk. The leaves are 15-30 cm long by 5-15 cm wide, and rounded at the base, with wavy edges. The midrib is prominent underneath the leaf. There are 8-13 pairs of side veins. The leaf stalk is stout and 1-2 cm long. The flower clusters arise in the axils of leaves on sideways growing, fruiting branches. Normally only 3-4 buds develop in each leaf axils and 2-4 flowers develop on each flower stalk. The flowers are white and have a scent. The flowers have almost no stalk. The fruit are round and 0.8-1.5 cm long by 1.2 cm wide. The fruit are green, but turn red when ripe. They turn black and remain on the tree till harvest. 20-40 fruit can develop at each node. The seed are 7-9 mm long, and flattened on the surface which is pressed together.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows more in the lowland tropics. It occurs naturally in rain-forests in Africa from 10°S & N of the equator and from sea level to 1,600 m altitude. In PNG it is mostly below 550 m above sea level. It grows in areas with rainfall from 1000 to 2,500 mm per year. Temperatures in the range 18°C to 32°C are suitable. It suits hardiness zones 10-12. In XTBG Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Many plants are grown from seed. They can be grafted onto other rootstock. If clonal cuttings are used, two different clones need to be planted together to ensure good pollination. Plants are spaced at 3 m by 3 m. Light shade is normally helpful. Several of the upright stems are allowed to grow, because some side branches die off.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants are cross pollinated. It takes 9-10 months from flowering to harvest. One harvest is made, picking dried cherries off the tree. These are then dried and hulled.

NOTES

There are about 40 *Coffea* species. In Botanical Gardens in Slovenia presumably in a hot house.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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