PLANT FACT SHEET

Solanum sessiliflorum Dunal

GENUS *Solanum* **FAMILY** Solanaceae

COMMON NAMES Cocona

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Fruit

The fruit are peeled and used for jams, preserves, pies and sauces.
A drink is made from the fruit.
The leaves are cooked and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A herb or small shrub. It grows 1-2 m tall. The leaves are oval and large. They are 30-50 cm long by 20-30 cm wide. The lobes taper to the tips. The lobes are triangle shaped and the edges are wavy. The flowers are 4-5 cm across. They are in racemes in the axils of leaves. The fruit is soft and oval. It is orange or red with subacid to sour pulp. There are many seeds. The skin of the fruit has a soft fuzz which can be rubbed off. The fruit are oval and 4-12 cm long by 3-6 cm wide. The fruit are edible.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It suits the hot, wet tropical lowlands. It grows between 200-1,000 m altitude in the Andes. It grows naturally in regions with temperatures between 18-30°C. It is best on light well-drained soils. It cannot tolerate root knot nematodes. The rainfall is 1,500-4,500 mm per year. It needs full sun. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seeds are allowed to ferment for a couple of days to remove the flesh then washed and dried before planting. Seeds can be put in a nursery and transplanted when 20-30 cm high. A spacing about 2 m apart is suitable. Plants can be grown by cuttings or air-layering.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Fruit mature about 8 weeks after pollination.

NOTES

There are about 1400 Solanum species.

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