PLANT FACT SHEET

Pouteria caimito (Ruiz & Pav.) Radlk.

GENUS *Pouteria* **FAMILY** Sapotaceae

COMMON NAMES Abiu, Caimito

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, seeds, Nuts

The ripe fruit is eaten raw. They are also used for desserts.
Occasionally they are used in ice-cream.

DESCRIPTION

A medium sized tree. It grows 10-15 m high but can be 40 m high. The trunk is 30 cm across. The tree branches at about 1 m high. The leaves are simple and alternate. The flowers occur singly or in small groups. They are usually on leafless twigs. The fruit is medium to large and is oval with a smooth skin. It is yellow and sweet. It is usually 5-10 cm across. It has a sweet translucent pulp. Unripe fruit contain a gummy latex. There are several named cultivated varieties. There are 1-4 seeds. These are brown and shiny.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It suits the hot, wet tropical lowlands. It needs a warm climate and year round moisture. It is a tropical plant, but will grow in subtropical places. It enjoys wet soil. It grows naturally in the Amazon and Andes. It grows to 1200 m in the Andes. It cannot tolerate frost. It suits hardiness zones 10-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seed germinate easily. Seedling trees vary in quality. Grafting and air-layering can also be used. Fresh seed are planted and germinate in 4-6 weeks. Some trees are self fertile and others need cross pollinating.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees will produce fruit after 7-10 years from seeds and after 3 years from grafts. Mature trees can produce 100-1000 fruit per year. Fruit mature in about 180 days.

NOTES

There are about 150-320 Pouteria species. They grow in the tropics.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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