PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Eucommia ulmoides* Oliv.

**GENUS** *Eucommia* **FAMILY** Eucommiaceae

**COMMON NAMES** Gutta-percha, Hardy rubber tree

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Leaves, Bark - spice

The bark is used to flavour pork and chicken. It is also added to wines.
The inner bark is fermented before drying or roasting.

## DESCRIPTION

A deciduous tree. It grows 20 m high. It is a broadly spreading tree. The bark is pale grey and deeply cracked. The leaves are oval and 20 cm long by 9 cm wide. They are leathery and taper to the tip. There are teeth around the edge. The leaves are glossy and dark green and droop on thin shoots. The side veins are prominent. The male and female flowers are on separate plants. The flowers are very small and without petals. They grow on old shoots. The fruit are green and winged. They occur in clusters and are 4 cm long. Each key contains a seed. The leaves have a rubbery latex.

## HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It is hardy. It grows in the mountain forests of China. It grows between 100-2,000 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 5-10. It is frost resistant but cannot tolerate drought. Arboretum Tasmania. National Arboretum Canberra.

## PRODUCTION

### Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed. They can also be grown from cuttings of young wood under glass.

## NOTES

There is only one Eucommia species. There is only one genus in the family. A form of rubber is extracted from the tree. It is used in medicine. The bark contains aucubin.

## PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International



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