



PLANT FACT SHEET

Coffea arabica L.

GENUS *Coffea* FAMILY Rubiaceae

COMMON NAMES Arabian coffee

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Leaves, Herb, Spice, Leaves - tea

The seeds are used for coffee. The seeds are roasted and then ground to make a drink.

Coffee extract is used for flavouring ice cream, candies, pastries, and soft drinks.

The roasted seeds are eaten as snacks.

The red fruit and leaves are chewed for their stimulant properties.

The leaves are used as a tea substitute.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen shrub. It grows to 3-5 m high and spreads to 3 m across. The stem is slender and the branches are flexible. The leaves are glossy green, oblong, and tapering towards the tip. They occur opposite each other and have easy to see veins. The leaves are 10-15 cm long by 5 cm wide. The flowering stalks grow from these side branches and have 1-4 flowers. The flowers are white, with 5 petals. They have a scent. Flowers occur in clusters in the axils of leaves. The fruit are green but change to red when ripe. They contain 2 seeds. The seeds are grey-green. They are about 12 mm long. They are flattened on the side where they are pressed together. Coffee seeds are commonly called "beans".

HABITAT

It is native to NE tropical Africa. A tropical and subtropical plant. It grows best in rich deep soils in a protected partly shaded position. It is drought and frost tender. It cannot stand flooding. It needs a temperature above 10°C. In West Africa it grows between 1,000-2,000 m altitude. In PNG it is mostly between 700-2,000 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 10-11. In XTBG Yunnan. At ECHO.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed. They can also be grown from cuttings. Budding and grafting can also be used. Seeds are planted in a nursery, under shade at first. They take 6-24 months before being ready to transplant. Plants are commonly pruned to produce a densely branched shrub, 3 m high. Two kinds of branches occur. The ones which stick upwards do not bear fruit but can produce buds for new branches. The branches which grow sideways then hang over, are the ones which fruit. Normally, only one, or up to four, of the upright branches are kept and others are pruned out.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants normally self pollinate. The fruit develops over 9 months. Coffee bushes bear fruit after 3-4 years and can continue to do so for 50 or 60 years. For best quality the outer layer of the seeds is removed in a pulping machine then fermented while wet for 12-24 hours before drying in the sun and having the parchment removed in a hulling machine. Five kgs of fresh berries would yield about 1 kg of dried clean coffee.

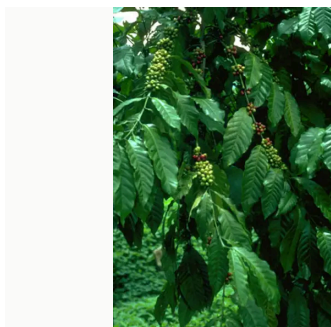
NOTES

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

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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