PLANT FACT SHEET

Couma utilis (Mart.) Muell. Arg.

GENUS *Couma* **FAMILY** Apocynaceae

COMMON NAMES Milk tree, Couma

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Exudate, Sap

The fruit is eaten fresh.
The latex from the tree is used in medicine and to flavour drinks. It is a substitute for chicle.

DESCRIPTION

A medium sized tree. It grows 5-17 m tall. The trunk is 5-20 cm across and has latex. The leaves are simple and opposite or alternate. The leaves are oblong and 5-10 cm long by 2-4 cm wide. The fruit are small and round. They are 2-4 cm across. They look a little like a guava. The pulp is sweet and edible. They contain several seeds.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows naturally in the lowland Amazon in Brazil. It is often in dry, non flooded zones. It grows up to 1,000 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. The ripe fruit are harvested and put into a plastic bag to rot the flesh and make the seeds easier to remove. The ripe seeds are sown and germinate in 20-40 days.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants develop at a moderate rate.

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NYBG herbarium "edible" (As Couma multinervis)

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