



PLANT FACT SHEET

Tamarindus indica L.

GENUS *Tamarindus* FAMILY Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Tamarind

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds, Leaves, Flowers, Spice, Vegetable

The pulp of the fruit is edible. It is also used for drinks.

The seeds are also edible, cooked. They can be roasted and ground into flour. The outer skin is removed.

The young leaves, flowers and young pods are also edible. They are eaten in curries. They are also dried.

They are used to make dishes acid. They are used in sauces and chutneys.

The young seedlings are also edible.

DESCRIPTION

A large spreading tree up to 24 m tall. It has a broad dense evergreen crown. In dry areas the tree can lose its leaves. The trunk can be 1 m across. The bark is rough and grey with a checkered pattern. The leaves are carried one after another along the branch. The whole leaf is 6-12 cm long and it is divided into 10-17 pairs of leaflets. These are oblong and without stalks. The whole leaf has a leaf stalk about 15 cm long. The leaflets are 1-2.5 cm long and 4-9 mm wide. They are a dull dark green and with a rounded tip. The flowers are pale yellow with brown markings. The flowers are about 2.5 cm across and hang on long many flowered stalks. The fruit is an oblong thin skinned fleshy capsule. The brown seeds are inside this long rough surfaced, sausage-like fruit. This pod is 6-8 cm long and about 2 cm wide and contracted between the seeds. The pod cracks when mature. It is a legume. The pulp is date like and reddish brown. The seeds are shiny and hard. The pulp of the pods is edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. The tree is cultivated in a number of coastal towns in the tropics as a street tree. It is probably best grown below 800 m altitude in the tropics. It is drought resistant. It cannot stand water-logging. It does well on coastal dunes above high water level. It suits semi-arid areas. It grows in the Sahel. It is salt tolerant. It must be in frost free locations. In Nepal it grows up to about 1200 m altitude. In Kenya it grows from sea level to 1,600 m altitude. It can grow in arid places. It grows in Miombo woodland in Africa. In XTBG Yunnan. At ECHO. It suits hardiness zones 11-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown by seeds or cuttings. It is best to sow seedlings in pots then transplant them but seed can be sown direct. There are about 1400 seeds per kg. Seed should be soaked in hot water or the seed coat nicked before sowing. Seed can be stored for 2 years if kept dry, cool and away from insects. Trees can be topped or

cut back and allowed to re-grow. Nothing grows under the trees due to the acidity of the leaves. Trees can be grown by air layering or cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows very slowly. Trees are long lived. Fruiting is seasonal. The season tends to be April to June. It is about 8-9 months from flowering to ripe fruit. The ripe fruit are often harvested by climbing the tree.

It plants are grown for shoots, they are planted closely.

NOTES

There is only one *Tamarindus* species. It has anticancer properties. Chemical composition: Protein (crude) = 4.8% (dry). Fat = 0.4% (dry). Fibre (crude) = 6.6% (dry). Ash (insoluble) = 3.8% (dry). Carbohydrate (soluble): Starch = 12.7% (dry). Sucrose = 0.4% (dry). D-glucose = 12.7% (dry). D-fructose = 11.1% (dry). Amino acids (g [16g N]-1: Aspartic acid = 6.2g. Threonine = 2.7g. Serine = 3.5g. Glutamic acid = 5.6g. Proline = 33.1g. Glycine = 3.1g. Alanine = 3.1g. Valine = 3.7g. Cysteine = 0.8g. Methionine = 1.0g. Isoleucine = 2.9g. Leucine = 4.3g. Tyrosine = 3.1g. Phenylalanine = 3.7g. Lysine = 3.7g. Histidine = 2.3g. Arginine = 2.5g. Minerals: Sulphur = 0.03% (dry). Potassium = 0.10% (dry). Magnesium = 0.14% (dry). Calcium = 0.26% (dry). Na = 0.01% (dry). K = 1.32% (dry). Zinc = 9mg/kg-1 (dry). Iron = .73mg/kg-1 (dry). Manganese = 2mg/kg-1 (dry). Copper = 5mg/kg-1 (dry). Aluminum = 44mg/kg-1 (dry). Also as *Caesalpinaceae*. Seeds are rich in flavonoids and antioxidants.

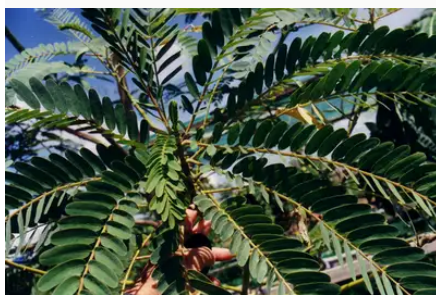
PICTURES



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