PLANT FACT SHEET

Afzelia quanzensis Welw.

GENUS *Afzelia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Lucky bean, Pod mahogany

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Vegetable, Bark - potash

The young leaves are pounded and cooked. They are slimy.
The bark is used to provide potash.

DESCRIPTION

A large spreading tree. It is deciduous. It grows 12-15 m high but can reach 35 m high. The bark is greyish-brown and flakes off in round woody scales. This leaves pale patches. The leaves are alternate and compound. There are 4-6 pairs of almost opposite leaflets. The leaflets are oblong and 2.3-9 cm long by 1.5-6 cm wide. They are shiny and dark green above and paler underneath. They taper towards the ends and the edges are wavy. The flowers are in simple sprays. The stalks are jointed. The fruit are large, flat, thickly wooded pods. They are 10-17 cm long. Inside the pod is a white pith. There are 6-10 dark brown seeds up to 3 cm long and 1.2 cm wide. They have a scarlet aril.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows in lowland woodland and dry forest. It is usually on deep sandy soils. It is very drought resistant but sensitive to frost. It grows in the savannah. In Brisbane Botanical gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by seeds or cuttings.

NOTES

There are 15 Afzelia species. They occur in the tropics. Also as Caesalpinaceae.
It is important for timber and carvings.

PICTURES

Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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