PLANT FACT SHEET

Brachystegia spiciformis Benth.

GENUS *Brachystegia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Msasa

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds

The seed are dried and boiled then eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A medium to large tree. It grows 8-15 m high. The branches twist and curve. The leaves hang downwards. They are dark green a and shiny. The leaflets are usually in 4 pairs. The pair of leaflets at the end are the largest. The leaflets are 2.5-8 cm long by 1-4.5 cm wide. They taper towards the tip. The base is unequal. The flowers are small and greenish. They grow in short dense spikes at the ends of branches. These are 3-6 cm long. The fruit are large woody pods. They are flattened and 14 cm long. They are dark brown and smooth when mature. The split open explosively.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in open deciduous forest. It tolerates a wide range of soil types. In Zimbabwe it grows between 1,060-2,000 m above sea level. In Brisbane Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds. Seed germinate easily. Seedlings are hard to transplant.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees are rather slow growing.

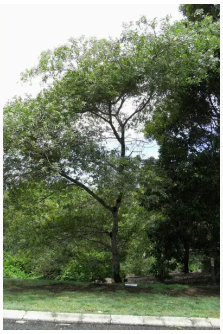
NOTES

Also as Caesalpinaceae.
This legume tree does not form nodules.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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