PLANT FACT SHEET

Saba comorensis (Bojer ex DC.) Pichon

GENUS *Saba* **FAMILY** Apocynaceae

COMMON NAMES Saba, Rubber vine

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds

The ripe fruit is eaten raw. The seeds are discarded. The seeds are also eaten.
The pulp is soaked in water, sugar added and the the juice drunk.
The plant is used to make sour milk.

DESCRIPTION

A creeper or vine. It grows 30-40 m long. It can be 1.9 m around. The stems are purplish-red. It has white milky sap. The leaf blade is 7-20 cm long by 4-10 cm wide. They are oval. It often has tendrils. The flowers are large and white. They have a sweet scent. They are in large groups at the ends of branches. The fruit are round and 6 cm across. They are yellow or orange. The fruit are edible. The shell is hard and bitter. The pulp is soft and reddish. It contains seeds.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in closed forest in West Africa and also in savannah woodland. It is often near the banks of streams. In Malawi it grows from 500-1,300 m altitude. In Tanzania it grows between up to 1,800 m above sea level and in areas with a rainfall between 1,200-2,400 mm. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds. The seeds germinate more easily after passing through the gut of an animal. It can also be grown from cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Fruiting is seasonal. Fruit are collected at the end of the rainy season and beginning of the dry season. In Congo fruit are available July to October.

NOTES

There are 3 Saba species. They occur in Africa.

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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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