PLANT FACT SHEET

Dracontomelon dao (Blanco) Merr. & Rolfe

GENUS *Dracontomelon* **FAMILY** Anacardiaceae

COMMON NAMES Mon, Dao

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves, Seeds, Flowers

The fleshy part of the ripe fruit is eaten raw. It is sour. They are used as a sour relish. They are used to flavour curries.
The fruit can be cooked with soy sauce and eaten with rice.
The flowers and leaves can be cooked and eaten as a vegetable.
The kernel inside the seed is edible.
CAUTION The sap of the tree may be irritating and /or poisonous.

DESCRIPTION

A large tree up to 50 m tall and with an umbrella shaped crown of leaves. It often has buttresses at the base. The leaves are hairy and compound with both the leaflets and leaves carried alternately. The leaves come one after the other on opposite sides and have 5 to 7 pairs of leaflets. The leaves are pointed at the end and bluntly pointed at the base. The leaflets have a smooth edge. Young leaves are reddish colour. The flowers are small white, with no smell and carried as several on a stalk. The fruit are yellow and round. The fruit is 2-3 cm across and has 5 flecks around it. There is little edible flesh around a flattened seed.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in lowland rainforest and in valleys up to about 800 m. It occurs in high rainfall areas. It grows in areas with an annual rainfall between 1,800-2,900 mm. It is common throughout the Philippines at low altitudes. The tree also occurs in other SE Asian countries. They are common from northern Luzon to southern Mindanao in the Philippines.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Trees are grown from seed. Seeds germinate in 28-67 days. Many trees grow wild. The fruit are crushed and the seed removed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It flowers and fruits throughout most of the year. Leaf fall and a fruit flush follows a dry spell. Trees can produce after 3-4 years. An average fruit weighs 17 g.
The season normally coincides with the breadfruit and mango season. The fruit turn slightly yellow when ripe

and the seed inside turns brown. If the seed inside is white, then the fruit is not ripe.

NOTES

Mon

Dracontomelon dao

What is Mon?

Mon is the Tok Pisin name of a common coastal tree which has edible fruit. Scientists have given it the Latin name Dracontomelon dao. This name was first given to the tree in 1908. Other scientific names were originally given. Two other names still sometimes used are Dracontomelon mangiferum and Dracontomelon puberulum. They all refer to the same plant.

What is Mon like?

It is a large forest tree with large buttresses at the base. The tree is in the mango family and has leaves made up of about 6 to 10 pairs of leaflets along a stalk. The flowers are small and grow as a group of small flowers at the ends of branches. They are pale yellow and about 1 cm wide.

The fruit are round, 3 or 4 centimetres across and have a small amount of edible flesh around a large seed. The fruit turn yellow when ripe. The fruit have 5 small scale like flakes around the middle.

The wood of the Mon tree is pale brown with black stripes and is sold as a timber called New Guinea walnut.

Where do Mon grow?

Mon trees are tropical trees and grow in several Asian countries including Papua New Guinea. Countries which have Mon include Thailand, India, China, Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

The tree only grows properly in high rainfall areas and are mostly in coastal areas but sometimes up to 500 or 1000 metres altitude.

Trees are more common along rivers and are also planted in villages.

In Papua New Guinea, mon trees are particularly popular as fruits in the Madang Province. Trees in the bush inland often have smaller fruit which are more sour. Fruit near the coast are larger and sweeter.

How do you grow Mon fruit?

Mon trees often grow naturally in the lowland bush. But in areas where mon are popular, and where sweeter kinds of mon occur, trees are planted. They are grown by using the seed our of the centre of a fruit.

If the tree is well looked after and well grown, it can start producing fruit after 3-4 years.

Using Mon fruit.

Mon fruit are produced seasonally. The season normally coincides with the breadfruit and mango season.

The fruit turn slightly yellow when ripe and the seed inside turns brown. If the seed inside is white, then the fruit is not ripe.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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