PLANT FACT SHEET

Senna singueana (Delile) Lock

GENUS *Senna* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Winter cassia, Sticky pod

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds - coffee, Pods, Fruit, Vegetable

The young leaves are eaten cooked.
The pods are eaten raw or made into a porridge after soaking, then boiling.
The seeds are roasted and used as a coffee substitute.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub or small tree. It grows 4-5 m high. It can grow 15 m high. The bark is brown and rough. It loses its leaves during the year. The leaves are compound with leaflets along the stalk. The leaves have 4-10 pairs of leaflets. The leaflets are oval and 2.5-5 cm long and 1-1.5 cm wide. There is a gland between each pair of leaflets. The flowers are deep yellow. They occur in large loose sprays. These are about 15 cm long by 20 cm wide. The fruit is a narrow pod. It is 25 cm long. It is constricted between the seeds. They are yellow when ripe.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in the drier savannah in tropical Africa. It suits hot arid places with a marked dry season. It can grow in rocky soils. It grows from 1500-1850 m altitude, and up to 2400 m altitude in Ethiopia. It re-grows after fire. It can grow in arid places. It is often on termite mounds. It grows in woodland and rocky hillsides at medium to low altitudes.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds. Seeds germinate easily.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is quick growing. In Tanzania fruit are collected during the dry season usually from July to November.

NOTES

There are about 100 Cassia species. Also as Caesalpinaceae.

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