PLANT FACT SHEET

Balaka longirostris Becc.

GENUS *Balaka* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Mbalaka niuniu

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: seeds, Nuts

The kernel of the fruit is edible.

DESCRIPTION

A slender solitary palm. It grows to 7 m high and is 5 cm across. The leaves are 1-2 m long. The leaf stalk is 0.5-26 cm. The leaflets are 7-14 on each side. The leaflets are wedge shaped. The ends of the leaflets are strongly lobed and with teeth along the edge. The flowering stalk is branched and is 5-22.5 cm long. The fruit is pear shaped and orange-red. It is 3.2-3.8 cm long and 1.1-1.6 cm wide.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in Fiji from sea level to 1,000 m altitude. It occurs in the rainforests. It grows in the mountains in moist places. It needs a shady, warm position in well drained acid soil. It cannot grow on high pH soils.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed. Fresh seed germinate easily. They take 4-6 weeks to germinate. Seed should not be allowed to dry out.

NOTES

There are 7 Balaka species.

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