PLANT FACT SHEET

Attalea phalerata Mart. ex Spreng.

GENUS *Attalea* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Shapaja

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds - oil, Palm heart, Cabbage, Nuts, Roots

A cooking oil is extracted from the seeds.
The fruit is edible, sweet and fibrous. A starch is extracted from it.
The palm heart is cooked and eaten.
The nut is eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A palm. It grows 20-30 m high. The trunk is 60-70 cm across. The fronds arch over. The leaves are 5-7 m long. They have leaflets along the stalk. The leaflets are grouped in threes. They are alternate and 1-1.2 m long. The flowers are along a stalk which hangs down. The fruit are carried in clusters. The fruit are oval and 6-7 cm long by 4 cm wide. There can be 200-300 fruit on a stalk. The pulp is edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. In Bolivia it grows up to an altitude of 900 m. It cannot tolerate poorly drained soil.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. The ripe fruit can be used directly as seed. In humid conditions they remain viable for 60 days. The fresh fruit is planted. They may take a year to germinate.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants develop slowly.

NOTES

There are between (22) 30-71 Attalea species. Some authorities divide them among Attalea, Orbignya, Scheela and Maximiliana.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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