PLANT FACT SHEET

Brahea edulis H. Wendl. ex S. Watson

GENUS *Brahea* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Guadeloupe fan palm

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Berries, Seeds, Cabbage, Palm heart

The fruit is eaten. It can be eaten fresh or made into jams and puddings.
The young leaf buds are cooked and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A palm which grows up to 10-15 m tall. The trunk is ringed with leaf scars. The trunk can be 40 cm across. The leaves are fan shaped and stiffly folded. They can be 1-2 m long and 1 m wide. About half way along their length they are divided into 70-80 segments. These split deeply at the tips. There can be teeth on the edge of the leaf stalk. The old fronds fall off. The flowers occur in large clusters. They contain both sexes. These are about 1.5 m long and hang from between the leaves. Large quantities of fruit are produced. The fruit are plump and black and about 2-3.5 cm across. The fruit pulp is edible. The seed is about 18 mm across.

HABITAT

A temperate and subtropical plant. It suits Mediterranean climates. They do not suit wet humid tropical conditions. They require a dry sunny climate. They can tolerate frosts down to -7°C. It Mexico they grow to 1,000 m altitude. They can grow in most soil conditions. Once established they require little water. They can tolerate wind and salt. Young palms can tolerate full sun at an early age. They need well drained soil. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Palms are grown from seed which germinate in 2-4 months.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants are generally slow growing. The fruit are picked as they ripen. Fruit take about a year to ripen after pollination. They are harvested when fully black and becoming soft.

NOTES

There are about 12-16 Brahea species. They all grow in Mexico.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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