PLANT FACT SHEET

Bambusa balcooa Roxb.

GENUS *Bambusa* **FAMILY** Poaceae

COMMON NAMES Balku bamboo, Baluka bamboo

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Shoots, Vegetable

The young shoots can be used as a vegetable. They are sliced and sun dried and then ground before eating. They are also used for pickles.
Caution: The shoots can contain an acid that is poisonous without proper preparation.
The fresh young shoots can be stored for 8-10 days.

DESCRIPTION

A densely tufted bamboo. The tip hangs over. The culm or stem is 17 m high. It can be 2.5-10 cm wide. The wall is 2 cm thick. The internodes or distance between joints is 20-45 cm long. Plants flower about every 35-45 years. The young shoot is blackish green. It is covered with blackish hairs. The leaf blade is oblong and 15-30 cm long by 2.5-5 cm wide. The flowering shoot can be 1 m long.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows in tropical monsoon climates up to 700 m above sea level. It can tolerate temperatures down to -5°C in a sheltered spot. Melbourne Botanical garden.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from rhizomes, culms or branch cuttings. They are planted out once roots and rhizomes have started to develop. They need to be 4-5 m apart. Plants should be mulched and watered during the dry season. Young shoots are harvested during the rainy season.

Harvesting and Seed Production

A shoot reaches full culm length in 2-3 years and becomes mature in 3-4 years.

NOTES

There are about 120 Bambusa species. They are tropical and subtropical in Asia. It is important for construction in Bangladesh.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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