PLANT FACT SHEET

Acacia tetragonophylla F. Muell

GENUS *Acacia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Dead Finish, Kurara

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Grubs

The seeds are eaten raw. In some places the seeds are cooked in the pod. They are also eaten when mature after being crushed into flour. They are eaten uncooked. They have a nutty flavour. The tree also often has edible grubs in its roots.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen shrub although in some areas the leaves fall during prolonged drought. It grows 3-5 m high and spreads to 3-6 m across. The stem is erect and the branches are spreading. They are normally smooth and round in cross section. It has a loosely branched growth pattern. The leaves (phyllodes) are 4 angled, and needle like. They taper to a long drawn out point. The leaf tip is sharp. They are 1-6 cm long by 0.1 cm wide and arranged in small clusters. The flower heads are yellow balls about 0.5 cm across. The balls are composed of about 50 flowers. They flower heads are on stalks about 1-3 cm long. There are 2-4 flower heads in each angle where leaves join the stem. The pods are small (7-8 cm long by 0.4-0.6 cm wide). They are dark brown and normally curved or twisted. The pods are constricted looking like beads on a string. The seeds are attached to the pods by yellow/red stalks (aril) which go around the seed. The seeds are rather soft. The plant forms thick prickly thickets.

HABITAT

A native of inland Australia. It will grow on most soils, but is most common on sandy soils near water courses. It prefers an open sunny position. It is drought and frost resistant. It suits arid and semi arid places. It mostly grows south of 21°S latitude. In its area of growth the rainfall is often only 18-25 mm per year. The temperature in the hottest month may be around 24°C. It cannot tolerate fire. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is grown from seed. The seed need treatment to break the hard seed coat. Normally this is by putting the seeds in very hot water and letting the water cool down overnight then planting the seeds immediately. It can also be grown by cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is slow growing. Flowering is from June to December. Seed is produce in autumn.

NOTES

There are about 1,350 Acacia species. Over 1,000 occur in Australia. Also as Mimosaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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