PLANT FACT SHEET

Spondias purpurea L.

GENUS *Spondias* **FAMILY** Anacardiaceae

COMMON NAMES Purple mombin

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves, Seeds, Nuts, Root

The fruit are eaten fresh or cooked or for jelly. It is used for drinks.
The stone or kernel can be roasted and eaten.
The leaves are cooked and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A medium sized tree. It grows 4-10 m high. It has an irregular trunk and broad crown. Often it is low and sprawling. It loses its leaves during the year. The leaves are made up of 5-12 pairs of leaflets. The leaflets are 2-4 cm long and they fall before flowering. The flowers are red and in groups 3-5 cm long. They are on the small branches. The fruit are small and red and sub-acid. They are round or oval and 2.5-5 cm long. They often grow in clusters of three. The fruit is edible. The fruit has a woody kernel which contains the seed. The flesh is creamy-yellow.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It suits the hot tropical lowlands. It grows naturally in tropical America. It is resistant to drought. It will produce on poor soils. They grow from sea level to 1,200 m altitude in Mexico.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Seeds do not normally grow. Plants are grown by cuttings and stem sprouts. Straight cuttings 6 cm thick and 1.5 m long are used. The cuttings are made at the start of leaf production. The cuttings are kept in the shade for a couple of weeks. They are then planted 8 m apart and at a depth of 30 cm. Flowers bud on the current year's growth so pruning can be done yearly. Pruning increases the size and weight of fruit.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The fruit matures in about 120 days.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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