PLANT FACT SHEET

Astrocaryum vulgare Mart.

GENUS *Astrocaryum* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Awarra palm, Tucum palm

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Kernel - oil, Palm hearts, Nuts, Cabbage

The layer around the seed is eaten.
An edible oil is extracted from the seed.
The palm hearts can be eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A spiny palm. It forms clusters. It can be 4-10 m high and trunks 15-20 cm across. The trunk is densely armed with black flattened spines. The crown has a number of leaves 5-6 m long. The leaves are feather-like. The leaflets droop. They occur in groups and often at different angles. The leaflets are shiny green above and greyish underneath. The male and female flowers are separate but on the same plant. The flowering stalks are 2 m long. They have several branches. The flowers are cream. The fruit are oval and 3.5 cm across. They have a short pointed beak at the tip. The fruit are orange when ripe.

HABITAT

It is a tropical palm. It will grow in the subtropics. It grows in Brazil in rainforest that does not get flooded.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed. Seed do not germinate easily. Seeds which are stored at 40°C for 60 days will germinate in 180 days. Fresh seed or fruit should be planted. It can also be grown from suckers.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The kernel is 36% oil. The fruit are harvested once per year.

NOTES

There are about 40-50 Astrocaryum species. The fruit are rich in Vitamin A.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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