PLANT FACT SHEET

Agave cantala (Haw.) Roxb.

GENUS *Agave* **FAMILY** Asparagaceae

COMMON NAMES Cantala, Maguey

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Flower stalks, Vegetable

The heart at the top is cooked and eaten. It is cut into small pieces and cooked with coconut milk, salt and sugar and some herbs.
The flower stalks are roasted and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A plant which keeps growing for 6-10 years. It is a tufted shrub. It grows 4-7 m high when flowering. It has underground runners. The leaves are bluish-green and 1.3-1.6 m long by 8-10 cm wide. It as a long black curved spine and spines along the edges. These curve upwards. About 250 leaves are produced during the life of a plant. The flower occurs as a long stalk 6 m high and produces flowers 6-8 cm long. These are followed by bulbils.

HABITAT

It can grow in hot dry climates. It grows in areas with 2,500 mm rainfall. It will tolerate wet conditions of climate and soil. It can grow in warmer areas than sisal. In Java it grows up to 1,700 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is normally grown from suckers. Suckers 40-60 cm high are used and they are planted 90 cm apart. It can be grown from seed. It can also be grown from runners or stolons and from bulbils.

NOTES

The leaves are used for fibre. There are about 250 Agave species. The Agavaceae are mostly in the tropics and subtropics. It is used for medicine in Nepal.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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