PLANT FACT SHEET

Bambusa vulgaris Schrader ex Wendl.

GENUS *Bambusa* **FAMILY** Poaceae

COMMON NAMES Common bamboo

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Shoots

The very young shoots are cooked and eaten. The shoots are bitter.
They are cooked, or added to soups and made into pickles.

DESCRIPTION

An erect clump forming spineless bamboo. It is a large bamboo with strong stalks used for buildings. The stalks can be 20 m tall and 5-10 cm across at the base. They are often not straight. The stalks can be green and glossy or yellow or yellow with green stripes. It very rarely flowers. The distinctive culm sheath (top of the leaf that is wrapped around the stalk) helps identify the plant. The culm sheath is triangular and 15-45 cm long by 20 cm wide. The edges are hairy. The leaf blade is 6-30 cm long by 1-4 cm wide.
The stems are smooth and usually yellow green and smaller than Kauayan-tinik of the Philippines and with a thinner wall.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows throughout the tropics and subtropics. It grows up to 1,200 m altitude. It does best at low altitudes. It can stand frost down to -3°C. It has been introduced to PNG and is common in the lowlands. (A different large bamboo is grown and eaten in the highlands of Papua New Guinea.) In the Cairns Botanical Gardens. In XTBG Yunnan. It suits hardiness zones 9-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is easily grown by planting cut portions of the green stalks. It can also be grown from shoots off the rhizome or underground stem and from branches.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Offsets can produce mature clumps in 7 years. They grow very quickly. Haulms can grow 4 m high in 2 weeks.

NOTES

There are about 120 Bambusa species. They are tropical and subtropical in Asia. Chemical composition of young shoots per 100 g edible portion: Water 88-90 g, Protein 1.8-2.6 g, Fat 4.1-7.2 g, Carbohydrates 0-0.4 g, Fibre 1.1-1.2 g, Ash 0.8-0.9 g, Ca 22.8-28.6 mg, P 27.5-37 mg, Fe 1.1-1.4 mg, Vitamin C 0-3.1 mg,

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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