PLANT FACT SHEET

Arenga engleri Becc.

GENUS *Arenga* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Dwarf sugar Palm, Formosan Sugar Palm, Taiwan arenga

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Cabbage, Starch, Sap, Palm heart

The pith of the stem is used to extract starch.
The sap from the flowering stalk is sweet and made into sugar.
The young leaves and buds are eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A small evergreen palm. It grows to 3 m high and spreads to 1.5 m across. The stem is erect and slender. It forms several stems producing a cluster. The stems are covered with fibres. The leaves are dull green above and silvery below. The fronds are 1.5-3 m long. The leaflets are crowded on the fronds. Often the ends and edges are irregular. The flowers are orange and occur in stiff branched stalks. The flowering stalks come from among the leaves and after that stalk fruits that particular stem dies. The fruit are deep red berries. They are 12 mm across and round. Each berry contains 3 hard grey seeds. The pulp of the fruit damages the skin.

HABITAT

It will grow from tropical to warm temperate locations. It grows up to 1,600 m above sea level. It will grow in most soils. It needs a protected position. It is damaged by frost or drought. It can tolerate sun or shade. It suits hardiness zones 9-12. Geelong Botanical Gardens. Melbourne Botanical gardens hothouse. Brisbane Botanical Gardens. In XTBG Yunnan. In Townsville palmetum.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. The seed germinate erratically taking either weeks or months. It is best to soak the seed for 3-5 days. It can also be improved by filing the mesocarp near the point of the hylum. It can be grown from suckers.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants grow slowly.

NOTES

There are 17-20 Arenga species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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