PLANT FACT SHEET

Oenocarpus bacaba Mart.

GENUS *Oenocarpus* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Bacaba

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Cabbage, Fruit, Oil, Palm heart

The fruit are used to make drinks. The fruit are eaten raw or boiled and eaten.
The fruit/nut yield a colourless sweet oil used for cooking.
Eating the shoots kills the palm.

DESCRIPTION

A solitary palm. The trunk is slender. It can be 20 m high. The trunk is 30 cm across. The crown is rounded. The false crown-shaft is like an upside-down pyramid. It is 1.3 m tall. The fronds are erect and arch over at the tips. The leaves are 5-7 m long. The leaf stalks are greyish green and 30-60 cm long. The leaflets are 1-1.3 m long. They grow at different angles and hang down giving a feathery appearance. The flowering stalk comes from below the lowest leaf and the segments hang down. It is 1.3 m long and the branches are bright red. The flowers are of one sex but both sexes occur on the flower stalk. The fruit are light purple when ripe. Each fruit contains one seed. The fruit are 2 cm long.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It does not grow in areas that get flooded. It can grow from the lowlands to 1,000 m altitude.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. The ripe fruit are harvested and can be used as seed. Their viability is short. The seedlings can be transplanted into the field 7-9 months after they germinate,

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is fast growing. It produces large amounts of fruit.

NOTES

There are 9 Oenocarpus species. It has antioxidant properties.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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