PLANT FACT SHEET

Annona reticulata L.

GENUS *Annona* **FAMILY** Annonaceae

COMMON NAMES Bullock's heart

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The ripe fruit is eaten fresh.
They are also used for preserves, drinks, ice cream, custards and other desserts
CAUTION: The seed kernel is poisonous.

DESCRIPTION

A small tree up to 7.5 m tall. It has several branches near the base. Trees loose their leaves at some times of the year. New shoots have short brown hairs but older wood is smooth and shiny. The leaves are long and spear shaped with short leaf stalks. Around the edge of the leaf is a clear edge. The leaves smell when crushed. Flowers are greenish yellow. They occur in groups where the leaves join the stalk. Flowers occur on new wood growth. The fruit are reddish brown in colour and 10-12 cm across. There is a fine hexagonal pattern over the fruit. Inside there are large brown seeds. The fruit are edible but the seeds are not eaten.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It occurs in the tropical lowlands and grows up to at least 1200 m altitude. In Colombia it grows between 500-1,900 m above sea level. It can grow on poorer soils with different levels of acidity. It cannot stand water-logging. It suits humid climates. It is less suited to dry climates. It can grow in arid places. In Nepal it grows to 900 m altitude. It suits hardiness zones 10-12. In Yunnan. In Brisbane Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are normally grown from seeds. Seedling trees vary quite a bit. Seedlings are easy to transplant. A spacing of 4-7 m is suitable. Better kinds can be grown using budding or grafting.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees begin fruiting at 3-5 years. Fruit setting is often improved by hand pollination. Fruit mature in about 200 days. Fruit can vary from 0.25 to 2.25 kg each. The fruit has 13% sugar. Fruit production is seasonal. A tree may bear 100-150 fruit in a season. The season is normally Dec. to March.

Planting instructions

Bullock's heart

Scientific name:Annona reticulata

What is the plant like?

The Bullock's heart is a small tree up to 7.5m tall. It has several branches near the base. New shoots have short brown hairs but older wood is smooth and shiny. Trees loose their leaves at some times of the year.

It has spear shaped leaves. They have short leaf stalks. Around the edge of the leaf is a clear edge. Leaves smell when crushed.

The flowers are greenish yellow. They occur in groups where the leaves join the stalk. They occur on new wood growth.

The fruit are round and about 10 to 12 cm across. They are yellowish brown in colour. Over the surface of the fruit there is a fine hexagonal pattern. There are large brown seeds inside the fruit. The flesh is yellow. The fruit are eaten raw.

Where is the Bullock's heart grown?

The Bullock's heart is a tropical plant. It occurs in the lowlands and up to about 1200 metres altitude. It occurs around some coastal towns.

It is less suited to dry climates.

How do you grow Bullock's heart?

Mostly trees are grown from seed. These trees vary quite a bit. Seedlings are easy to transplant. Trees need to be about 7m apart.

Better kinds can be grown using budding or grafting.

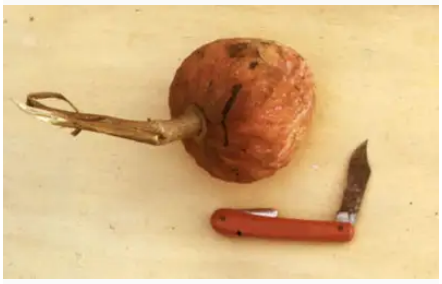
Trees begin to produce fruit after about 3 to 5 years. Trees flower and fruit throughout the year.

NOTES

There are about 100-150 Annona species. It has anticancer properties.

PICTURES

Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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