PLANT FACT SHEET

Garcinia indica (Thouars) Choisy

GENUS *Garcinia* **FAMILY** Clusiaceae

COMMON NAMES Kokam Butter, Goa butter

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Seeds - oil, Fruit, Spice, Leaves

The fruit is dried and used for flavouring curries. It is used in jellies and syrups. They can also be eaten raw.
The fat of the seeds is extracted and used as a butter substitute called Kokam.
Kokam is used as a souring agent like tamarind.
The ripe fruit is eaten and used for drinks.
The fruit peel is used as a spice.

DESCRIPTION

A slender tree. It grows 15 m high. The branches droop. The tree often has buttresses. The leaves are oval and red when young but become light green. They are 5-10 cm long. They are sword shaped and almost without a leaf stalk. They have 6-10 pairs of side veins. The flowers are small. The male flowers are in groups of 3-7 at the ends of branches. Flowers with both sexes occur singly. The fruit are round. The fruit are 2.5-4 cm across and dark purple when ripe. The seeds are embedded in a red acid pulp. There are 5-8 large seeds.

HABITAT

It is a tropical tree. It grows in Karnataka, Maharastra, the Western Ghats of Kerala, West Bengal and Assam. It grows up to 800 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is difficult to propagate. It can be grown from seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The fruit are harvested when ripe. The rind is used. It is preserved by drying in the sun. In southern India fruit are available November to February.

NOTES

There are about 300 Garcinia species.
The fruit are anti-oxidant. Other products such as skin care products are being developed.

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