PLANT FACT SHEET

Cassia fistula Linn.

GENUS *Cassia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Cassia, Golden Shower

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Flowers, pod, Fruit, Spice, Seeds

The young leaves and flower buds are cooked as a vegetable. The leaves are chopped small before cooking. The flowers are fried.
The pulp of the pods is eaten but not the seeds.
CAUTION: The pod pulp is a purgative but safe. It is only eaten in small quantities.
The pulp is used as an ingredient in spiced Indian tobacco.

DESCRIPTION

A deciduous or evergreen tree. It grows to 9-20 m high and spreads 3-5 m wide. The stem is erect and slender. Sometimes it has small buttresses. The leaves are 45-60 cm long and divided with 6-16 leaflets which are 15 cm long and 4-9 cm wide. The leaflets are wedge shaped at the base. The leaves are bright green. The leaf stalk is 7-10 cm long. The flowers are yellow and have a smell. They occur in long drooping sprays which can be 20-40 cm long. The flowers are 4 cm across. The fruit are brown pods. These can be 20-60 cm long and 1.5-2 cm wide. They are black and smooth. The seeds are brown and glossy. They are 1.3 cm long and flattened.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It is native to India. It prefers a rich well drained soil. It needs a protected sunny position. It is drought and frost tender. Plants need a temperature above 16°C for growth. It grows all over India up to 1500 m altitude. It can grow in arid places. In XTBG Yunnan. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

The plants are grown from seed. The seed need to have the hard seed coat broken. This can be done by boiling them for a few minutes before sowing. It can be cut back and will re-grow.

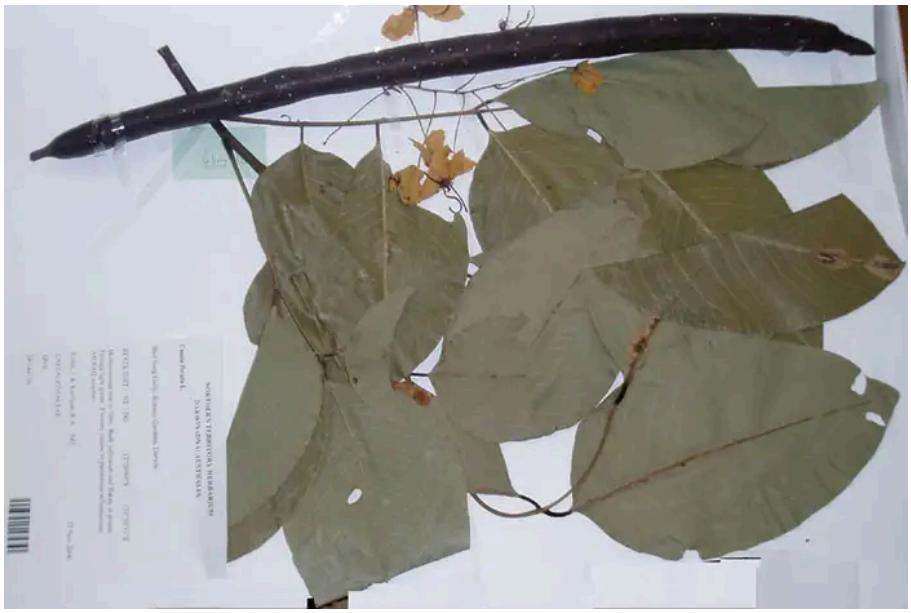
Harvesting and Seed Production

It is fairly slow growing. Trees start flowering when 5 years old.

NOTES

There are 100 Cassia species. This group has been revised to a smaller more consistent group. Also as Caesalpinaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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