Sorting out the Annonas

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The ECHO Online Seed Catalog is offering an addition to our collection of Annonas, which are in the pawpaw/sugar apple family, Annonaceae. *Rollinia mucosa (http://edn.link/jzx7dd)*, commonly called biriba, rollinia, or wild sugar apple, can grow in either sun or shade and is a larger tree than many in this family. Biriba's fruit turns yellow when ripe, unlike the light green color of other Annonas (Figure 14).The fruits' white flesh is sweet, juicy, and creamy. However, it rapidly over-ripens, causing the flesh to turn clear and slimy; this limits its use for home consumption.

Figure 14. Ripe biriba. *Source: Tony Rodd, Creative Commons Attribution License*

ECHO's seed bank carries several other Annonas. Sweetsop, sugar apple, or anon (*Annona squamosa (https://www.echocommunity.org/resources/fe357809-3e41-4e7d-a31b-7c5499fd9852)*), a dessert fruit, is best pureed or used in juices after the many seeds are removed. Custard apple (*Annona reticulata (https://hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/morton/custard_apple.html)*) produces large fruits that are eaten fresh or made into smoothies, milkshakes, and custards. Soursop or guanabana (*Annona muricata (https://www.echocommunity.org/resources/163400f6-428e-41ab-9755-2eccb9b6d1a5)*), another large-fruited Annona, is best suited to the hot, humid tropics; the small size of the tree makes harvesting easy, and the fruit is used in a wide variety of desserts and drinks. Atemoya (https://www.echocommunity.org/resources/06b9bb66-b554-42d3-9b09-2e7fdbe3641c), a hybrid between *Annona cherimola* and *Annona squamosa*, is heat sensitive but cold tolerant, making it suitable for higher elevation production in the tropics. Atemoya is eaten fresh and made into ice cream.

Annonas are an excellent addition to a family home garden, food forest, or smallholder market garden. Follow the links and choose the species that best suits your climate, available space, and culinary preferences.

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