PLANT FACT SHEET

Theobroma grandiflorum (Willd. ex Spreng.) K. Schum.

GENUS *Theobroma* **FAMILY** Malvaceae

COMMON NAMES Cupuacu, Big flower chocolate tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Pulp, Fruit

The pulp or flesh of the fruit is eaten. It is used for drinks, ice cream and jams. It is used for tarts, marmalades and sherberts.
Cocoa butter can be made from the seeds.

DESCRIPTION

A medium sized rainforest tree 5-20 m high. The leaves are large and much like cacao. They are simple and 25-35 cm long by 6-10 cm wide. The fruit are borne on the trunk and main branches. The fruit is about the size of a cantaloupe. They are 12-25 cm long by 8-12 cm wide. The fruit has a large centre seed pod filled with seeds. There are 20-50 seeds. The pulp is white and has a characteristic odour. The pulp is edible.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It suits the hot, wet tropical lowlands. It is found throughout the rainforest in Brazil. It grows best in a hot, humid climate. It is best where there is little temperature variation and temperatures of about 24°C. The natural temperature range is 21.6°-27.5°C. Trees need plenty of water. The relative humidity is 64-93%. The annual rainfall is 1,900-3,100 mm.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are usually grow from seed. The seeds are often spread naturally by birds and monkeys. The ripe fruit are harvested and the seeds removed. The fresh seed still covered with pulp can be planted. They germinate in 20-40 days. Seedlings can be transplanted into the field in 5-6 months.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants grow at a moderate rate. The pulp makes up about 1/3 of the pod. It produces about 16 fruit on each plant. A fruit can weigh 0.5-4 kg.

NOTES

Also put in the family Byttneriaceae and the Sterculiaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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