PLANT FACT SHEET

Delonix edulis (H. Perrier) Babineau & Bruneau

GENUS *Delonix* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Tara

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Vegetable, Seeds

The seeds are eaten when immature. The bitter outer skin is removed.
Caution: Eating larger amounts may cause digestive upsets and the chemical may be removed by cooking.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub. It grows 4-6 m high. It has many branches. The bark is pale grey and smooth. The shoots end in spines. The leaves are in tight clusters. There are 2-3 pairs of small opposite leaflets. The leaflets are oval to round and 4-6 mm long. The flowers are in the axils of the leaves. The flowers are large. There are 5 white petals. The fruit is a large thin pod. It is leathery and flattened. It opens in a spiral. The seeds are oblong and have a cream leathery seed coat. The pod hangs down and is 20-30 cm long by 2 cm wide. It is dented between the seed. The seeds are oval to kidney shaped and 2.5 cm long by 1.5 cm wide.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in sub-arid scrub. It grows on sands and limestone. It cannot tolerate frost. It grows in areas with a rainfall below 300 mm per year. It can grow in arid places. It grows between 15-100 m above sea level. It is best with alkaline soils. It suits the seasonally dry tropics.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from seeds. They are soaked for 10 hours then planted. The germinate quickly. Side branches develop quickly so plants in nursery plots need to be spaced apart. Plants can be transplanted after 3 months. A spacing of 4 m x 4 m is suitable.

NOTES

There is only one Lemuropisum species.
It has potential as a medicinal crop due to prolines that are useful for collagen treatment and tumours.
Also as Caesalpinaceae.

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