PLANT FACT SHEET

Dendrocalamus asper (Roemer & Schultes) Backer ex K. Heyne

GENUS *Dendrocalamus* **FAMILY** Poaceae

COMMON NAMES Giant bamboo, Sweet bamboo

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Shoots

The tender shoots are eaten as a vegetable or pickled in vinegar or salted. The shoots are harvested before they emerge from the soil.
The shoots have good canning quality.

DESCRIPTION

A very large densely tufted bamboo. It is a woody grass. It forms large groves. The culms or stems can be 20-30 m high. The clumps can spread 12-24 m wide. The stalks are 15-20 cm across. They are covered with fine velvety brown hairs when young. The internodes can be 10-20 cm long lower down and 30-50 cm long higher up. The nodes are swollen. The lowest nodes have many aerial roots. The nodes in the middle and higher have branches. The culm sheath is 20-40 cm long by 20-25 cm wide. The leaf blade is 30 cm long by 2.5 cm wide.

HABITAT

A tropical bamboo. In tropical Asia it grows from sea level to 1500 m altitude. It does best between 400-500 m altitude. It grows best on heavy soils with good drainage. It is found in Makiling Forest in Laguna in the Philippines at lower elevations and also in Mindanao. In the Cairns Botanical Gardens. In XTBG Yunnan. It suits hardiness zones 9-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from rhizomes, culm or branch cuttings. The spacing is 5-10 m apart. Mulching is essential to produce young shoots.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The shoots emerge in the rainy season. They develop to their full height in one year. A good healthy clump can produce several shoots each year. A good clump with 10 culms can produce 60 shoots in one year. The edible portion of young shoots is 5.4 kg before peeling and 1.8 kg after peeling. A well established plantation can produce 10 tonnes/ha/yr or edible shoots.

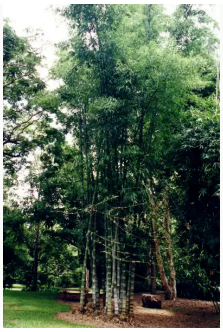
NOTES

There are about 29 Dendrocalamus species. Most bamboo shoots contain hydrogen cyanide which is destroyed on cooking.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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