PLANT FACT SHEET

Citrus latifolia (Yu. Tanaka) Tanaka

GENUS *Citrus* **FAMILY** Rutaceae

COMMON NAMES Bears' Lime, Persian lime, Tahitian lime

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The fruit is used for juice and processed products.

DESCRIPTION

A small evergreen tree. It is almost thornless. It grows 1.8-4.5 m high. The branches droop. The leaves have broad, flat-winged leaf stalks. Young leaves are mauve. The flowers have a purple tinge and have a scent. They occur throughout the year. The fruit is medium sized, green and very sour. The fruit are round. They are 3-4 cm across. They can be 8-10 cm across. The skin is thin and smooth. The skin remains bright green when ripe. The pulp is green and seedless.

HABITAT

It grows in temperate climates. It is more tolerant of cold than Mexican limes. It cannot tolerate wet soil. It needs a warm sheltered site. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by grafting. A spacing of 4-6 m is suitable. Normally when seeds occur these give trees and fruit of mixed quality. Air-layering is the best method. Trees can be budded.

Harvesting and Seed Production

A tree can produce 28-40 kg per year. They occur throughout the year. Most fruit are produced without fertilisation. Fruit can be stored after ripening on the tree or in a fridge for 6-8 weeks.

NOTES

There are 20 Citrus species. Several hybrids have been formed. This one may be a cross between Citrus aurantifolia and another species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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