



Common names

Physic nut, Purging nut,

Euphorbiaceae

Scientific name

Jatropha curcas

Edible portion

Leaves, **Caution**, Honey, Seeds, **Caution**,



Description

A high shrub or small tree. It is deciduous and has a thin crown. It is up to 5-8 m high. It has milky sap. The leaves have 3-5 lobes. They are 6 cm long by 15 cm wide. Flowers are separately male and female on the same plant. They are small and yellowish-green. They are at the ends of the branches. The fruit is a yellow capsule. Plants are pollinated by insects. Seeds are black and 2 cm long by 1 cm wide. They are rich in oil.

Distribution

It is native to tropical America. It is a tropical and subtropical plant. It is drought resistant. It sheds its leaves during the dry season making it suitable for arid and semi arid regions. It can grow well in areas with annual rainfalls of 300 to 1,000 mm. It is mostly in lower altitudes below 700 m and with annual temperatures above 20° to 28°C. It needs well drained soils but can grow in poor nutrient soils. It can grow in arid places. It suits hardiness zones 10-12. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

Found in:

Africa, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Asia, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bermuda, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central Africa, Central African Republic, CAR, Central America, Chad, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo DR, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, East Africa, East Timor, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Europe, Fiji, French Guiana, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guiana, Guianas, Guinea, Guinée, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hawaii, Himalayas, Honduras, India, Indochina, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Laos, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Martinique, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mediterranean, Mexico*, Middle East, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands Antilles, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North America, Pacific, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, PNG, Parauquav, Peru.

Use

CAUTION: Fruit and seeds are very poisonous. The nut has been reported as being eaten in Mexico after being boiled and roasted. This however is not recommended. Some kinds have less poison and the embryo should be removed. The young leaves have been reported as being eaten after cooking. They act as a purge.



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Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or cuttings. Seedlings can be transplanted but it is best to plant cuttings directly where they are to grow. Using cuttings is very easy. Large cuttings should be used. It can be cut back and will re-grow.

Production

Seeds germinate in 10 days. In humid regions near the equator flowering occurs throughout the year. Plants are not affected by daylength. It takes 90 days from flowering to fruit maturity. The tree can continue to produce nuts for 50 years.

Nutritional Values

Jatropha curcas

Edible Part	/100 g edible portion	Moisture %	Energy KJ	Energy Kcal	Protein g	Provit A µg	Vit C mg	Iron mg	Zinc mg
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