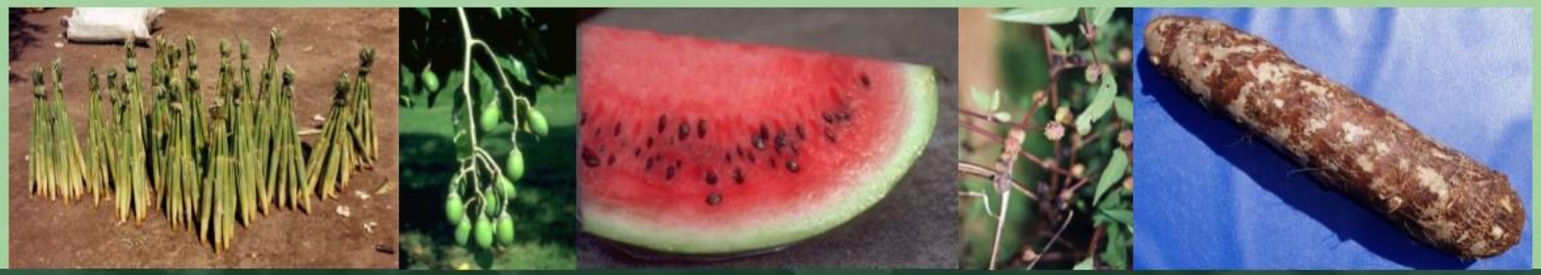
Food plants for healthy diets in the Western Pacific

Practical ways of growing local food plants and doing it well



FOOD PLANT SOLUTIONS
ROTARIAN ACTION GROUP

Solutions to Malnutrition and Food Security

www.twollamas.org.au

A project of the Rotary Club of Devonport North, District 9830 and Food Plants International

www.foodplantsolutions.org

Food plants for healthy diets in the Western Pacific

Two Llamas Environmental & Social Projects works with remote Indigenous communities throughout Oceania and Southeast Asia. We partnered with Food Plant Solutions to help improve nutritional intake by sharing knowledge, strengthening self-reliance and improving food security. For further information about our work, please reference: www.twollamas.org.au

For further details about the program please contact us at: info@foodplantsolutions.org or info@supwildernessadventures.com (Two Llamas Environmental & Social Projects)

In addition to this booklet, other publications have been produced for the Western Pacific, all can be downloaded from our website - www.foodplantsolutions.org

We encourage and welcome your support.

Food Plant Solutions - A project of the Rotary Club of Devonport North,
Rotary District 9830 & Food Plants International

Using food plant resources well


Coastal almond


Taro


Winged bean

The health, well-being and food security of a nation requires making the best use of all available food plant resources.


Cassava


Slippery cabbage


Watermelon


Peanut

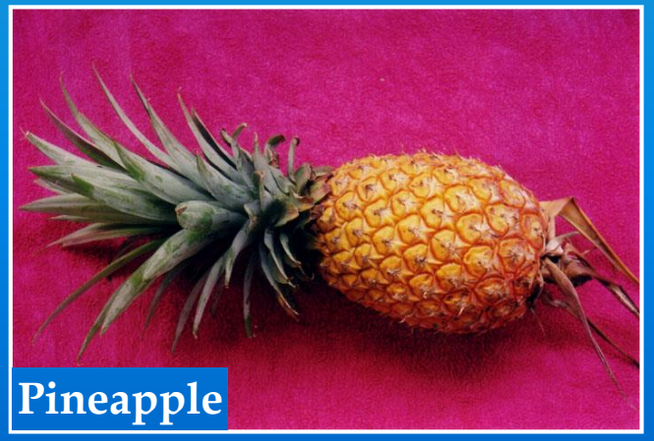

Okra

Food plants for healthy diets in the Western Pacific


Sweetfern

With a rich, diverse tropical climate, a variety of soils, altitudes, and rainfall patterns, it is time to discover and explore the amazing range of frequently over-looked tropical food plants that suit the locations, are rich in nutrients, and are adapted to this climate. It is time for the Western Pacific to be proud of its own tropical foods.


Lesser yam


Pineapple

There are lots of tropical food plants in the region - Samoa has 251, Vanuatu 364 and Fiji has 771.


Pigeon pea

Healthy diets

To stay healthy all people, and especially children, should eat a wide range of food plants. This should include some plants from each of the food groups – energy foods, growth foods and health foods. Then each of the nutrients required by our bodies will be met in a balanced manner.

Guava

Health food

Sweet potato

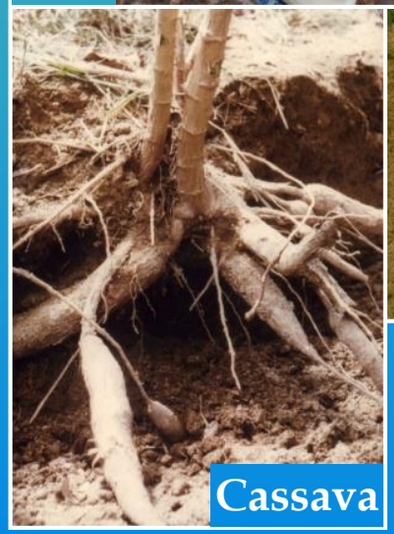
Energy food

Peanut

Growth food

Food security


Taro


Cassava


Sweet potato


Slippery cabbage

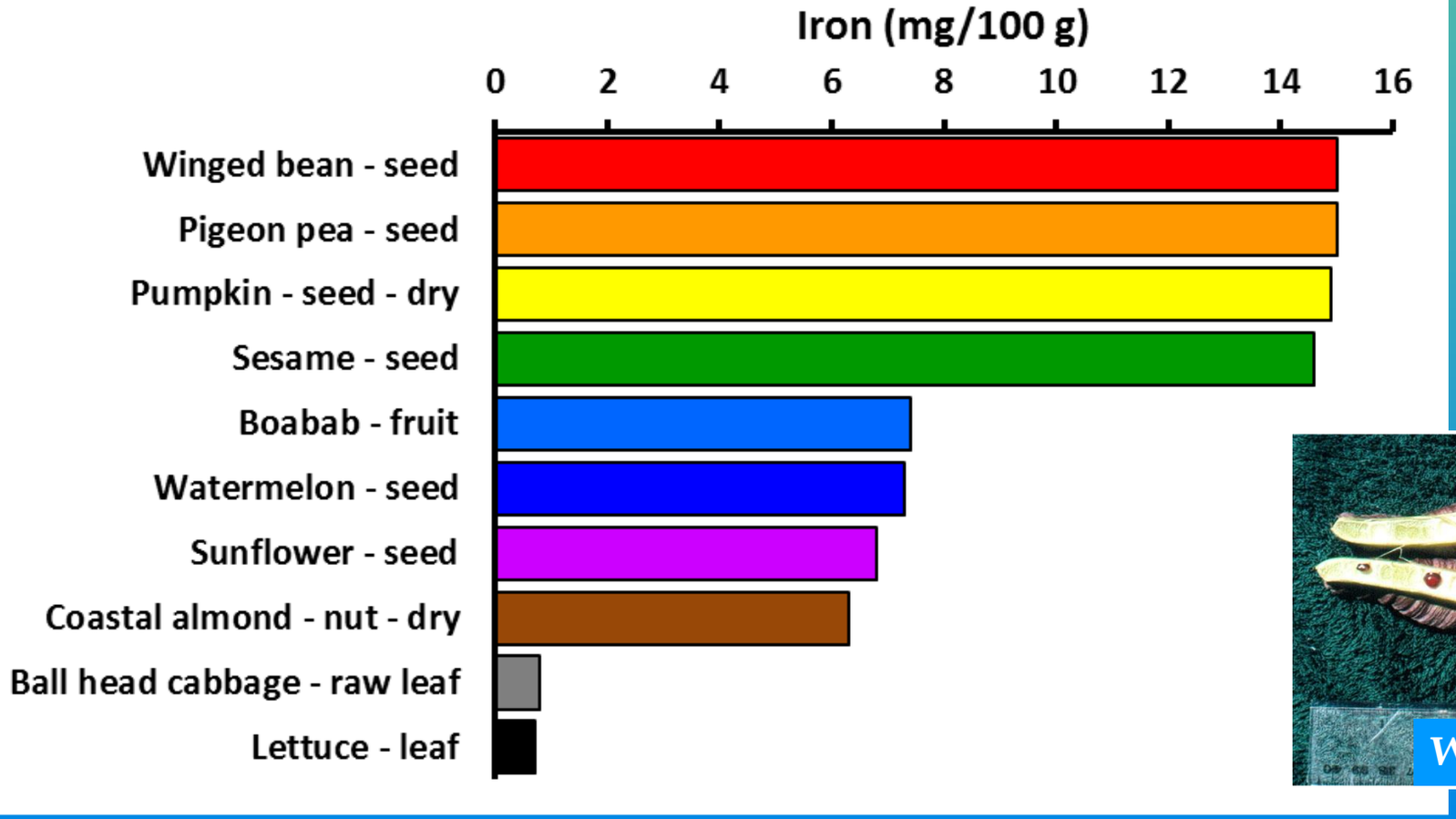

Sweet leaf


Cashew


Pawpaw

Grow a range of different food plants, planted at different times throughout the year, so food doesn't become short in some seasons. This should include fruit & nut trees.

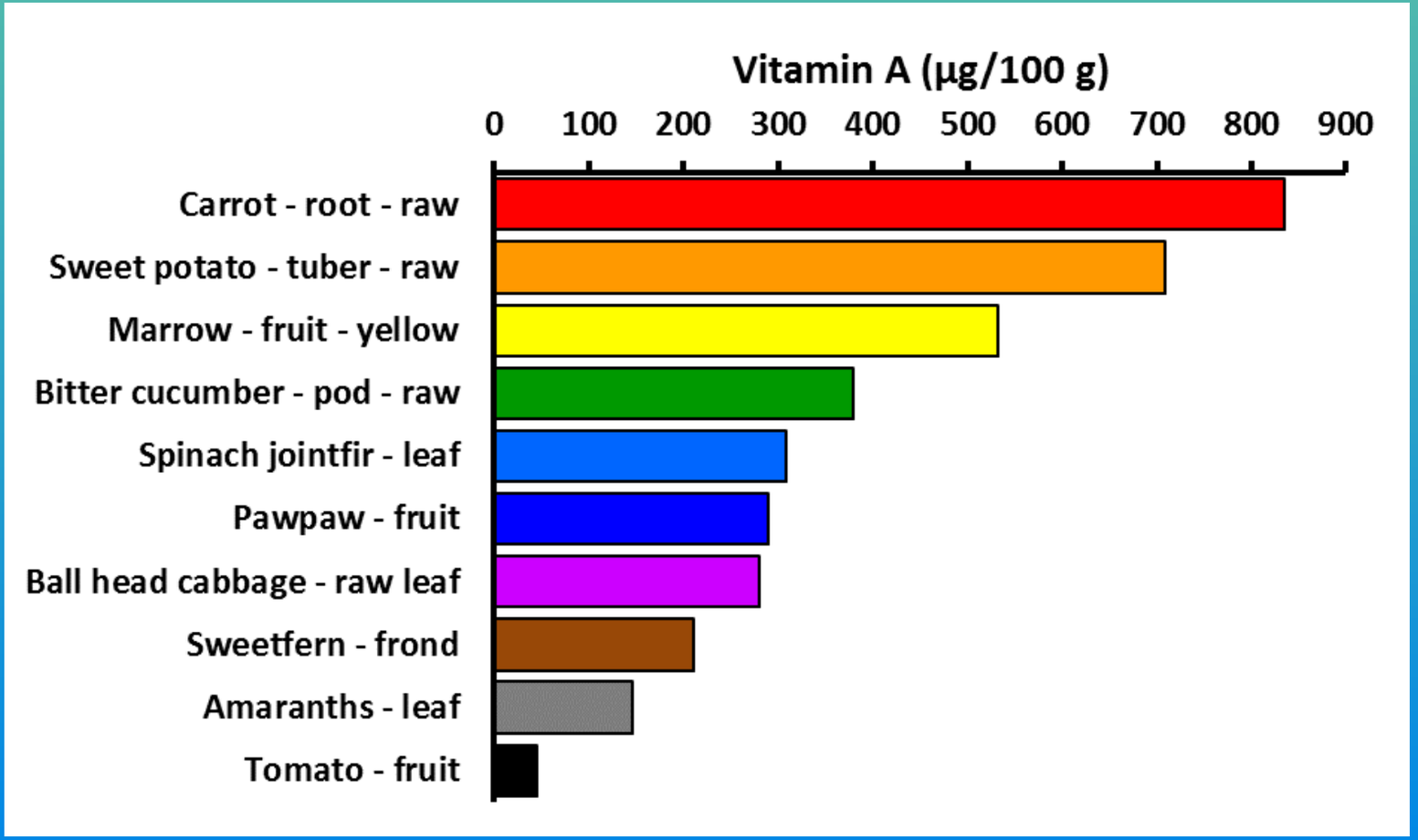
Iron for healthy blood




Winged bean

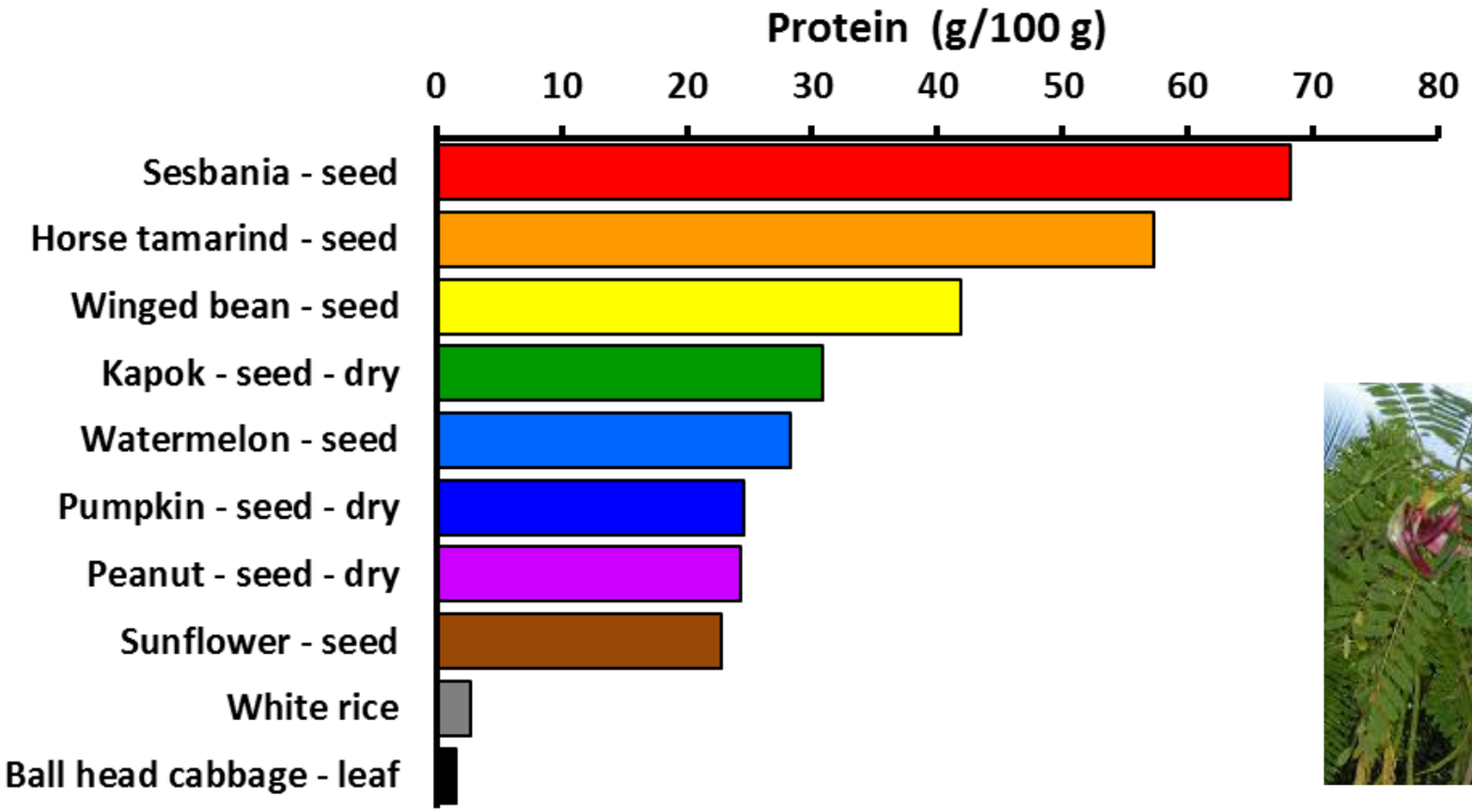
Iron is important in our blood. It is what makes our blood red. Iron helps oxygen get to our lungs. This helps us have energy to work. When we are short on iron we are called anaemic. Iron is more available when Vitamin C is also present.

Vitamin A for good eyesight



Vitamin A is very important for eyesight. People who are short of Vitamin A have trouble seeing at night. In plants, this chemical occurs in a form that has to be converted into Vitamin A in our bodies.

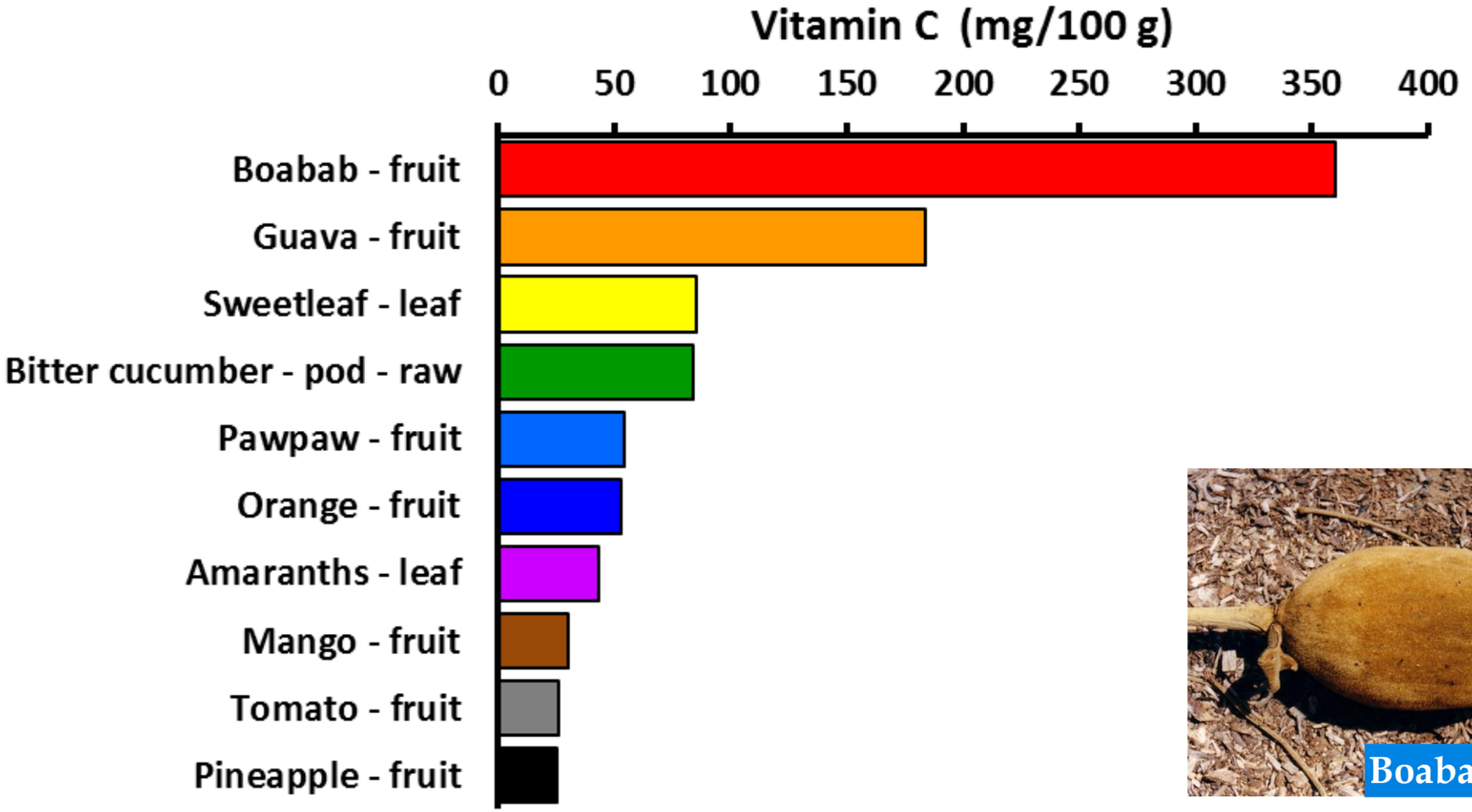
Protein foods




Sesbania

Food plants add an important amount of protein or growth food into our diets. Fish and meat can improve the quality of the protein.

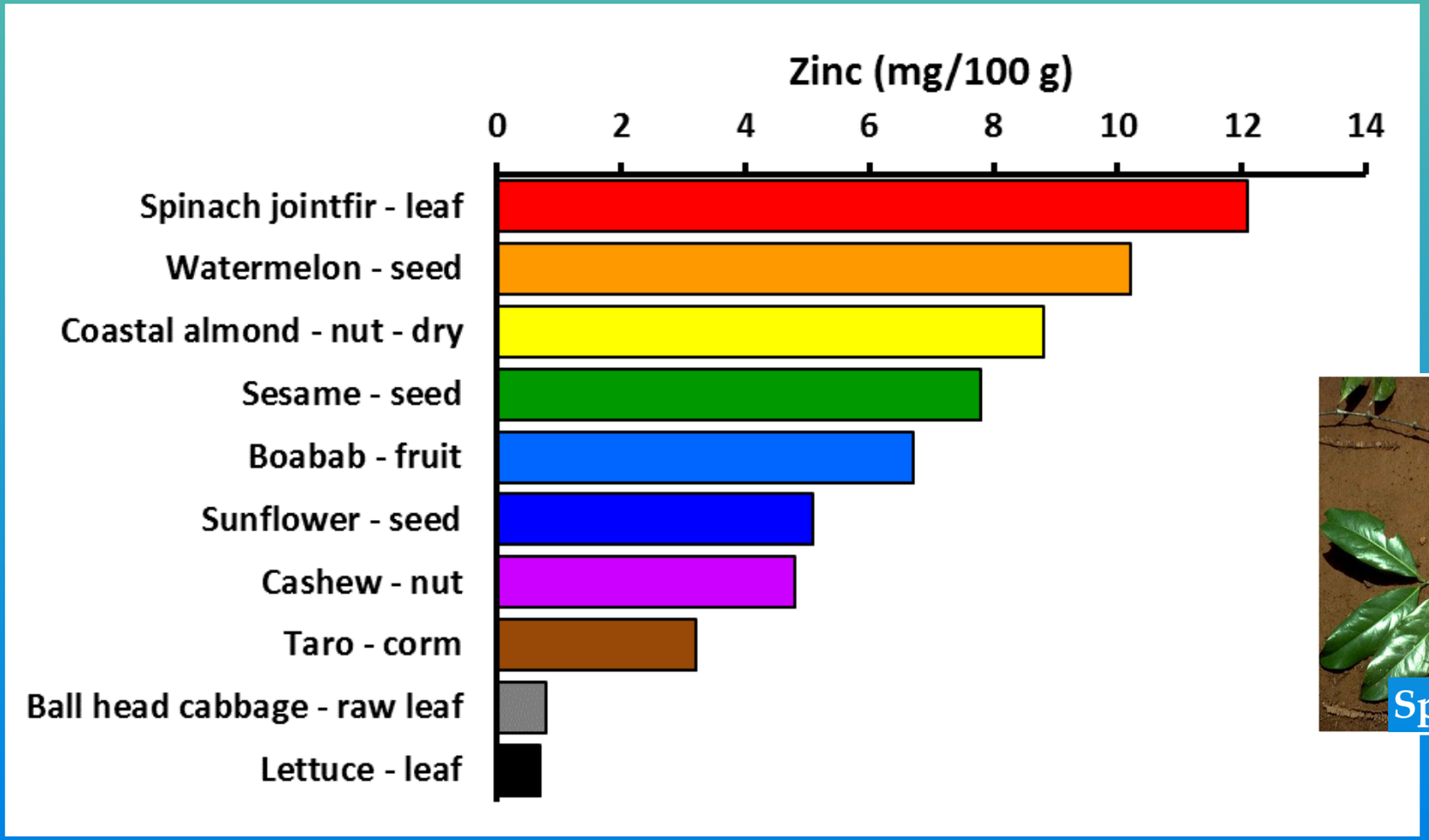
Vitamin C for good health



Boabab

Vitamin C is important for helping us to avoid sickness.

Zinc for growing bodies




Spinach jointfir

Zinc is particularly important for the healthy growth of young children and teenagers.

Leafy green foods

Slippery cabbage

Amaranth

Dark green tropical leaves are an important source of iron, protein and other vitamins and minerals essential for healthy diets. Everybody, especially women and children, should eat a fish tin full each day.

Sweet leaf

Spinach jointfir

Root crops are perfect plants for hot humid tropical climates


Sweet potato


Chinese taro

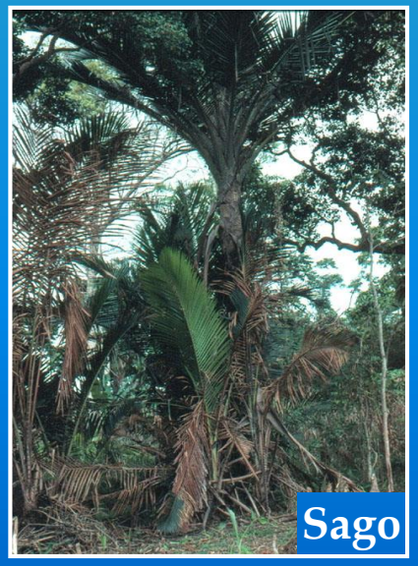
Starchy staple foods are the lifeblood of the Western Pacific.

We need to look out for pests, disease, and signs that the plants are growing in poor soil.


Taro


Lesser yam


Cassava


Sago

Beans provide protein and restore soils


Winged bean

Beans have special bacteria attached to their roots that allow them to take nitrogen from the air and put it into the soil for plants to use. It is free fertiliser!

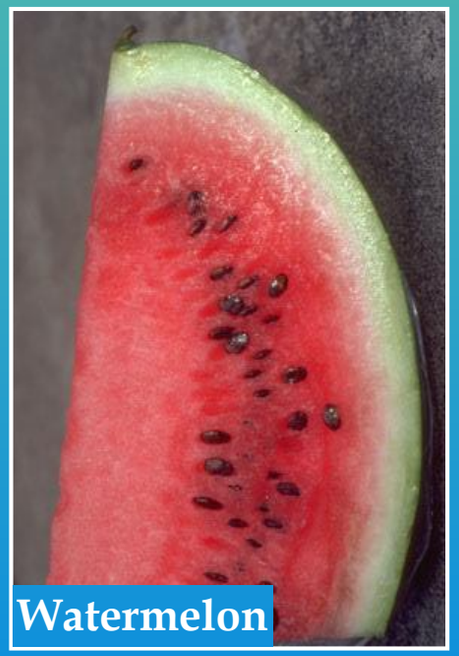

Peanut


Snake bean


Pigeon pea


Sesbania

Everyone should eat some fruit every day


Watermelon

Fruit provide minerals and vitamins and other important nutrients that everybody needs to stay healthy and well.

Good farmers plant several kinds of fruit trees.


Pawpaw


Pacific lychee


Guava


Mango

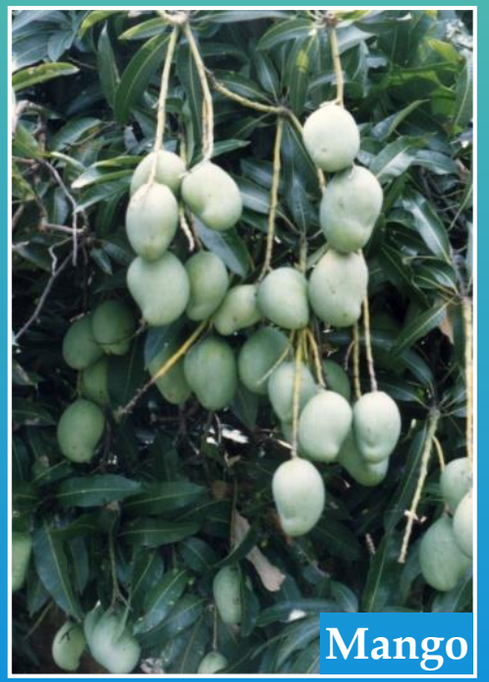

Pineapple

Fruit & nut trees for around houses


Coastal almond


Sesbania


Boabab


Mango


Pawpaw

Fruit to be enjoyed by all.
Some need to be planted for the future.
Many fruit are seasonal.
Some grow quickly.


Cashew

Vegetables for variety and nutrition


Bitter cucumber

As some vegetables only grow in certain seasons, families should plant a wide range to provide food all year.


Carrot

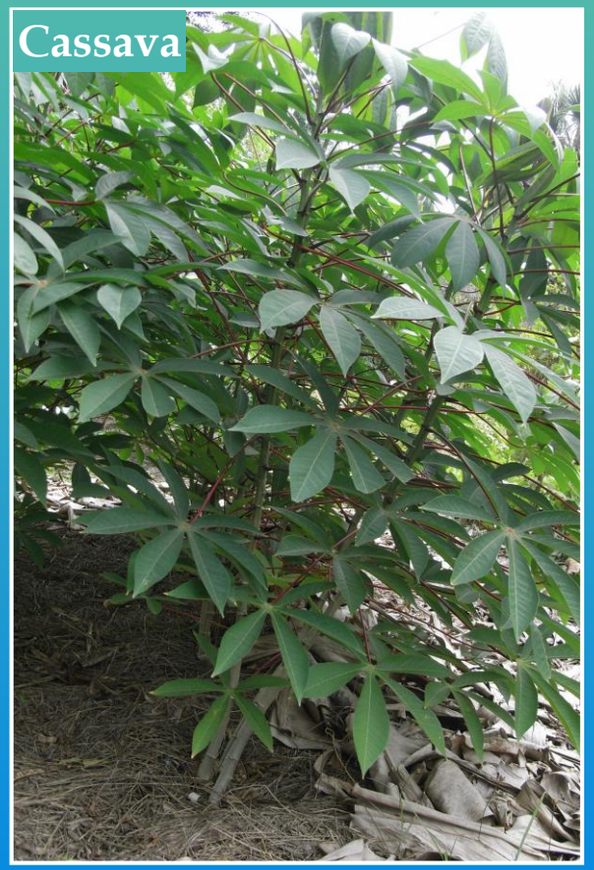
Some vegetables and edible leaves should be planted near houses so they are easily available even on wet days, or when people are too tired or busy to go to distant gardens.


Amaranth


Marrow


Okra

Plants for the edge of gardens


Cassava


Banana


Pineapple

Larger plants can be grown around the edges of gardens.


Slippery cabbage

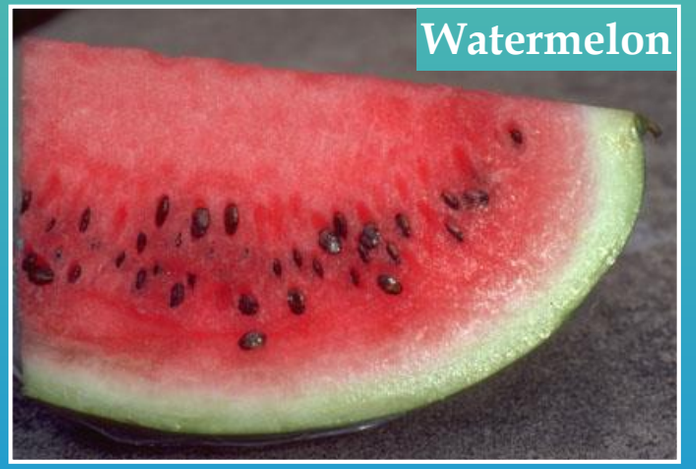

Sweet leaf


Pawpaw

Plants for the edge of gardens


Long pitpit


Taro


Watermelon


Pigeon pea


Sunflower


Guava

Plants for garden beds


Carrot


Marrow


Amaranth


Peanut


Sweet potato


Okra

Plants to climb on fences


Winged bean


Bitter cucumber

Many plants can be grown on fences around houses and gardens.


Pumpkin


Snakebean

Plants for swampy places

Taro

Sweetfern

Food plants can be grown in all sorts of places, even swamps.

Pests, disease and deficiencies

Banana scab moth damage

The very small moth hides from the sun under the flower bracts.

If plants are grown well, they are less damaged by insect pests and diseases. If the soil is poor, they may go dry or pale. It is important to recognise these signs and act early.

The taro blight fungus washes in the rain on hot wet nights.

Taro blight

Cassava growing in very poor coral soil cannot take up enough plant food.

Cassava short of nutrients

This fungus scab gets bad when soils are poor, and also on varieties from overseas.

Wrinkled sweet potato leaves

This fungus makes leaves die off early when they get damaged.

Yam anthracnose

Scientific name	English
Abelmoschus esculentus	Okra
Abelmoschus manihot	Slippery cabbage
Adansonia digitata	Boabab
Amaranthus tricolor	Amaranths
Anacardium occidentale	Cashew
Anans comosus	Pineapple
Arachis hypogea	Peanut
Cajanus cajan	Pigeon pea
Carica papaya	Pawpaw
Citrullus lanatus	Watermelon
Colocasia esculenta	Taro
Cucurbita pepo	Pumpkin
Cucurbita pepo	Marrow
Cyrosperma merkusii	Swamp taro
Caucus carota subsp. Sativus	Carrot
Dioscorea esculenta	Lesser yam
Diplazium esculentum	Sweetfern
Gnetum gnemon	Spinach jointfir
Helianthus annuus	Sunflower
Ipomoea batatas	Sweet potato
Mangifera indica	Mango

Scientific name	English
Manihot esculentum	Cassava
Metroxylon sagu	Sago
Momordica charantia	Bitter cucumber
Musa sp.	Banana
Pometia pinnata	Pacific lychee
Psidium guajava	Guava
Psophocarpus tetragonolobus	Winged bean
Saccharum edule	Long pitpit
Sauropus androgynus	Sweet leaf
Sesbania grandiflora	Sesbania
Terminalia catappa	Coastal almond
Vinga unguiculata subsp. Sesquipedalis	Snake bean
Xanthosoma sagittifolium	Chinese taro

Notes

Acknowledgements

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