

# FOOD PLANTS FOR HEALTHY DIETS IN CAMEROON



*PRACTICAL WAYS OF GROWING LOCAL  
FOOD PLANTS AND DOING IT WELL*



FOOD PLANT SOLUTIONS  
ROTARY ACTION GROUP  
Solutions to Malnutrition and Food Security



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

[www.foodplantsolutions.org](http://www.foodplantsolutions.org)

# Food plants for healthy diets in Cameroon



Hope for a better future (H4BF) cooperative society is a Cameroon youth led non-governmental, apolitical and non-denominational organization formed in 2009. H4BF's mission is to create opportunities for growth and poverty reduction, so as to enhance sustainable development initiatives in the country.

H4BF, in its intervention strategies, seeks key partnership opportunities and networks to shape the evolution of food systems in Cameroon to end poverty and hunger amongst the rural poor, especially vulnerable groups including pregnant women and young children. H4BF adopts verified sustainable innovative agricultural practices with a special focus on climate-smart agriculture and building more inclusive and efficient food value chains. The partnership with Food Plant Solutions boosts the implementation of this key strategy and brings H4BF closer to achieving this goal.

In addition to this booklet, other publications, which can be downloaded from our website ([www.foodplantsolutions.org](http://www.foodplantsolutions.org)), have been created for Cameroon.

For further details about the project please contact us at: [info@foodplantsolutions.org](mailto:info@foodplantsolutions.org)

We welcome and encourage your support.



**Food Plant Solutions** - A project of the Rotary Club of Devonport North, Rotary District 9830 & Food Plants International. This booklet is based on information from the Food Plants International (FPI) database, "Edible Plants of the World", developed by Tasmanian agricultural scientist Bruce French.

Food Plant Solutions operates in accordance with Rotary International Policy but is not an agency of, or controlled by Rotary International



# Using food plant resources well



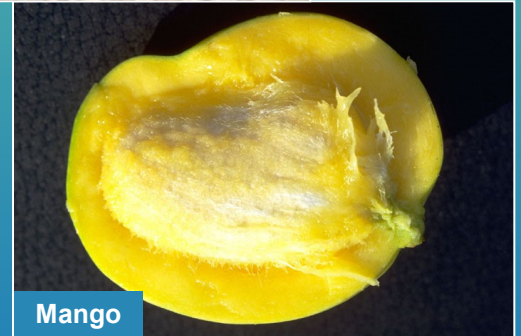
**The health, well-being and food security of a nation requires making the best use of all available food plant resources.**

# Food plants for healthy diets in Cameroon

With a rich, diverse tropical climate and 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, and are rich in nutrients.



Hausa groundnut



Mango



Goat's horn



# 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 - e.g. Sweet potato

Growth foods - e.g. Cashews

Health foods - e.g. Grain amaranth

Then each of the nutrients required by our bodies will be met in a balanced manner.

Cashew nut



Growth food

Health food



Grain amaranth

Sweet potato



Energy food

# Food security

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 and nut trees.



Edible hibiscus



Lotus seed herb



Chinese taro



Sweet potato



Jack bean



Finger millet



Taro

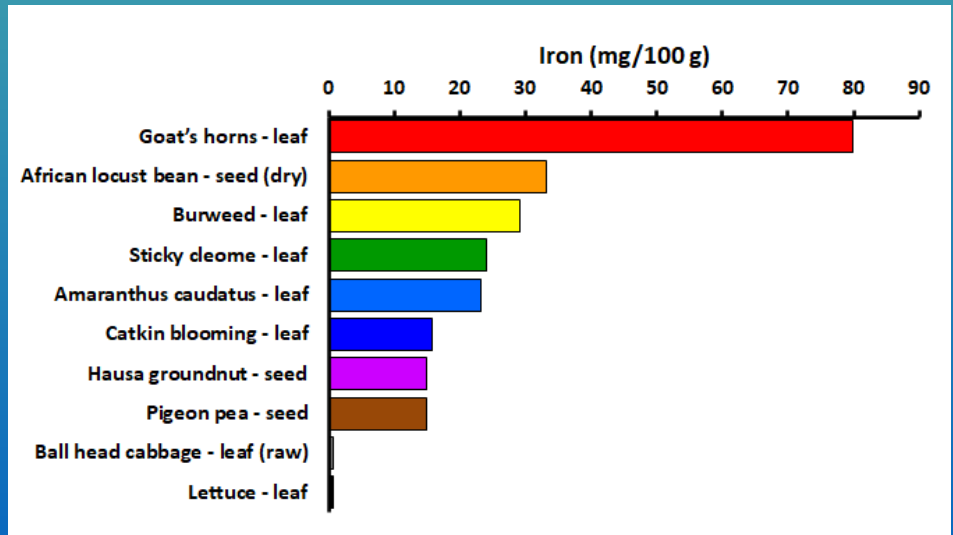
# Iron for healthy blood

Iron is important in our blood. It is what makes our blood red.

Iron helps oxygen get to our lungs. This helps us to have energy to work.

When we are short of iron we are called anaemic. Iron is more available when Vitamin C is also present.

Soaking dried peas overnight before cooking them makes the iron more available.

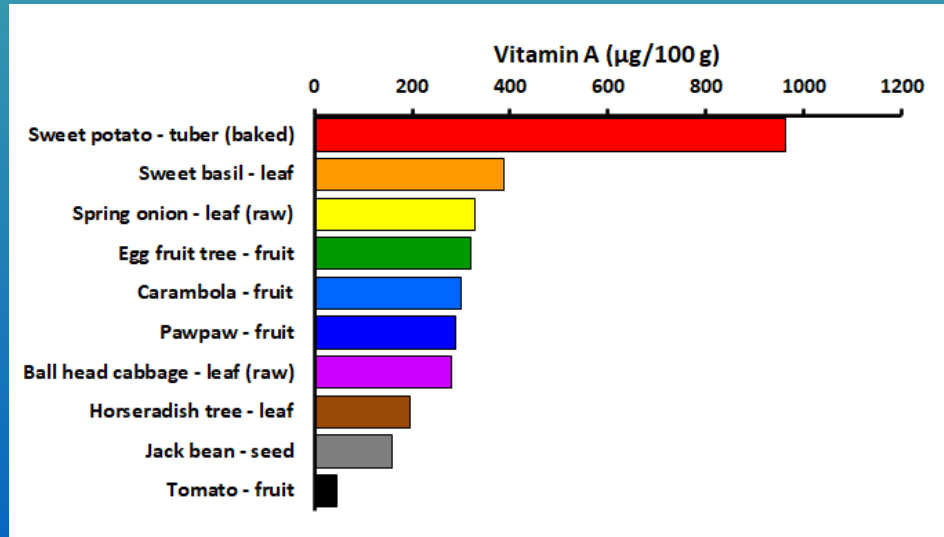
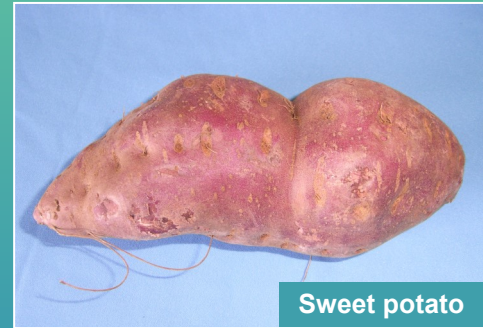


# Vitamin A for good eyesight

Vitamin A is very important for eyesight and fighting disease, particularly in infants, young children and pregnant women.

People who are short of Vitamin A have trouble seeing at night.

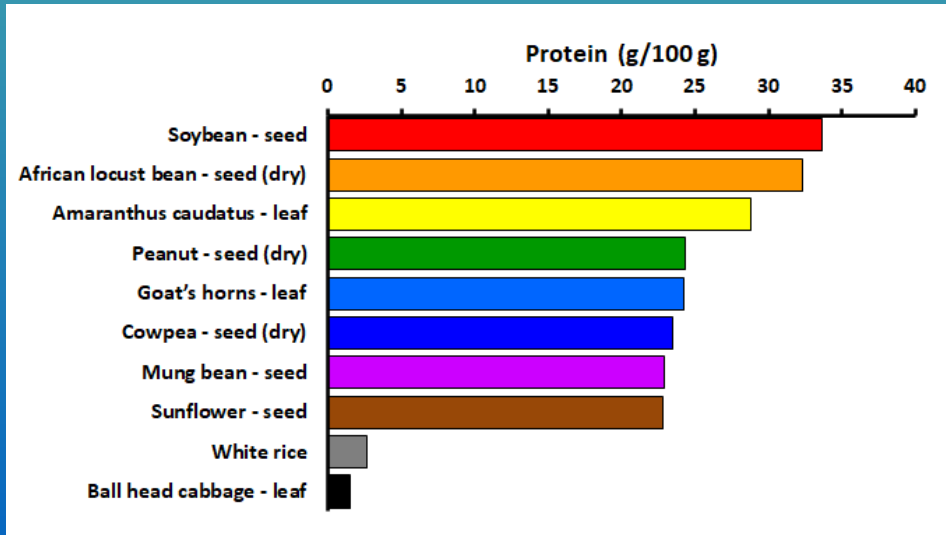
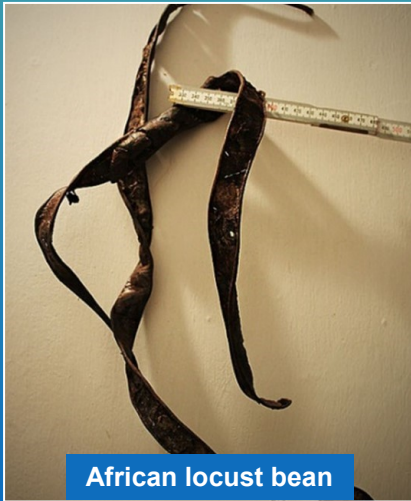
In plants, this chemical occurs in a form that has to be converted into Vitamin A in our bodies.





# Protein foods

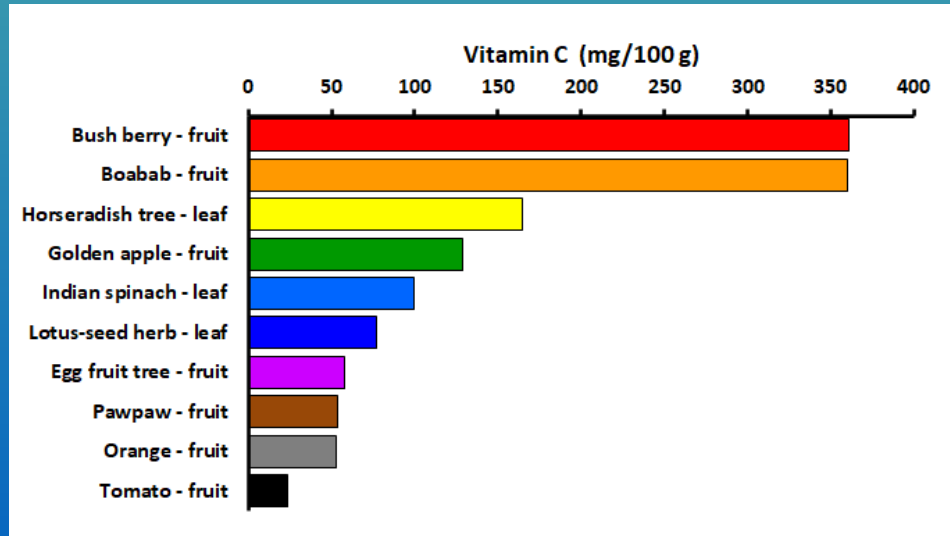
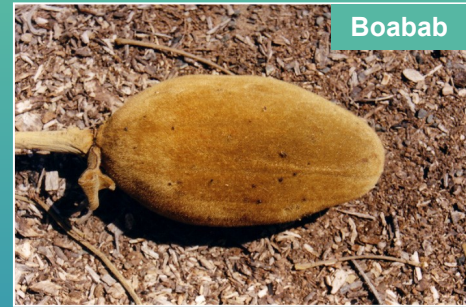
Food plants can be important sources of protein, particularly if fish and meat are not readily available.





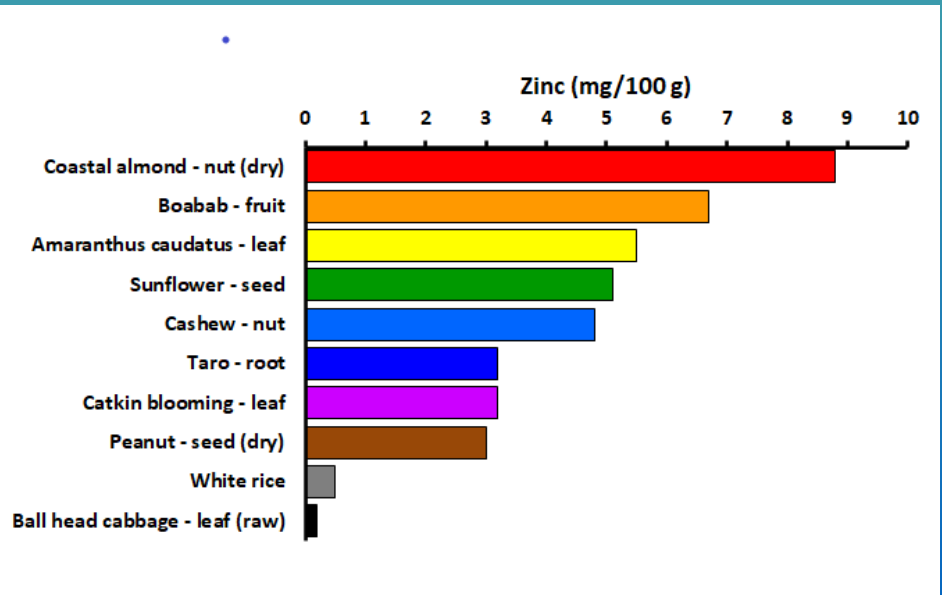
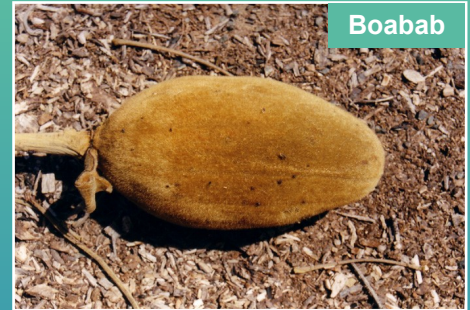
# Vitamin C for good health

Vitamin C is important for helping us to avoid sickness.



# Zinc for growing bodies

Zinc is particularly important for young children and teenagers to help recover from illness and be healthy.



# Leafy green foods are important

**Dark green leaves are an important source of iron, protein and other vitamins and minerals essential for healthy diets.**

**Dark green leaves contain folate, which all women of child-bearing age need.**

**Low levels of folate at conception can lead to serious birth defects.**

**Everybody, especially women and children, should eat a hand full of leafy greens each day.**



# Root crops are perfect plants for hot humid tropical climates

Starchy staple foods are the lifeblood of Cameroon.

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



Taro



Maize



Country potato



Sweet potato



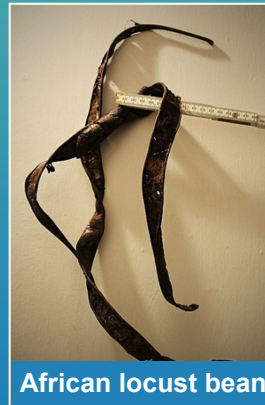
Greater yam



# Beans provide protein and restore soils

**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!**

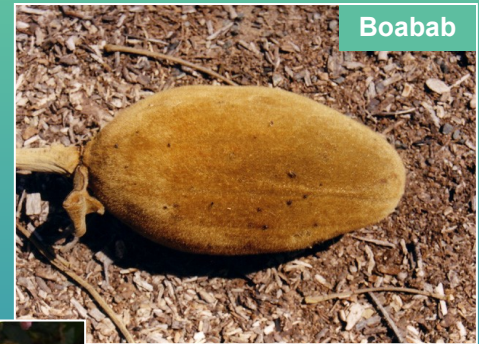




# Everyone should eat some fruit everyday

**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.**



Boabab



Bush berry



Golden apple

# Fruit and nut trees for around houses

**Fruit to be enjoyed by all.**

**Some need to be planted for the future.**

**Many fruit are seasonal. Some grow quickly.**



# Vegetables for variety and nutrition

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

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.



Purslane



Moringa



Bullrush millet



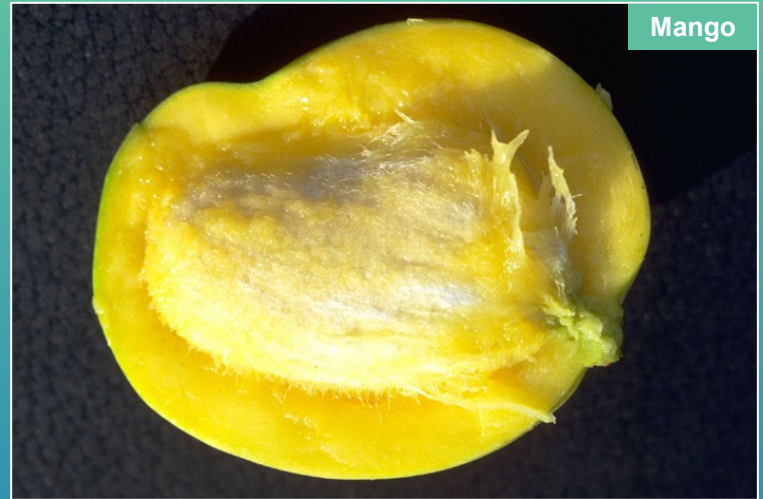
Pumpkin



Smooth loofah



# Plants for garden edges



# Plants for the edge of gardens

Larger plants can be grown around the edges of gardens.





# Plants for garden beds

Maize



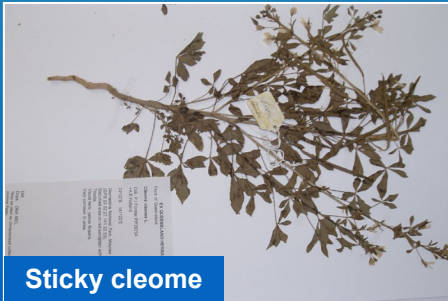
Soybean



Purslane



Sticky cleome



Sweet potato



# Plants to climb on fences

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



Bitter cucumber



Greater yam



Catkin blooming



Smooth loofah

# Acknowledgements



**This publication was made possible through the generous support of Rotary District 9830, the Rotary Club of Blackwood and the Rotary Club of Aurora Gungahlin.**

**It would have not been possible without the commitment and support of the various volunteers, who have shared the vision and unselfishly given their time to support this project.**

**Review, layout and formatting - Lyndie Kite and John McPhee**

For further details about the project please contact us at [info@foodplantsolutions.org](mailto:info@foodplantsolutions.org).  
We welcome and encourage your support.



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

Food Plant Solutions operates in accordance with Rotary International Policy but is not an agency of, or controlled by Rotary International



# Notes



FOOD PLANT SOLUTIONS  
ROTARY ACTION GROUP  
*Solutions to Malnutrition and Food Security*

*[www.foodplantsolutions.org](http://www.foodplantsolutions.org)*