

Cultivation of custard apple fetches more

Custard apple, a subtropical fruit crop, is used for fresh consumption and preparation of value-added products. It is a drought hardy tree and suitable for cultivation in dryland areas. Arka Sahana variety is suitable variety for cultivation. A new variety, Phule Janaki, has been released. It is vegetatively propagated and used for making ice-cream, powder etc.

Custard apple (*Annona squamosa*) is most widely cultivated fruit. It was introduced to southern Asia before 1590. In India, it is popularly known as *Sitaphal* or *shareefa*. Custard apple is sub-tropical deciduous tree belonging to Annonaceae family.

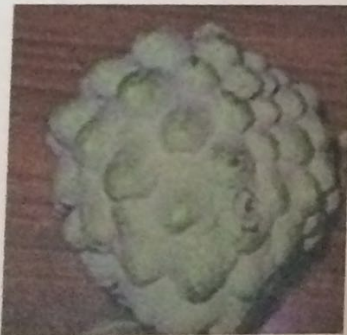
Uses

Its fruits are usually eaten as fresh and utilized commercially as flavoring for ice cream. It is also rich in potassium and magnesium that protect from cardiac disease. This fruit is also known to be great for eyes, and cure indigestion. The green fruit and seed have effective vermifugal and insecticidal properties and are used as astringents in diarrhea and dysentery. The astringent bark, leaves, unripe fruit and seed can be used as a source of the alkaloid anonaine. Custard apple roots have strong purgative character and its seed and seed cake is used in soap and cattle feed respectively. The custard apple starts flowering in July and small number of flowers bear fruit. The flowers develop into fruits during the winter season. The fruit



Fruit bearing habits in custard apple

takes between 20 and 25 weeks to reach maturity under hot semi-arid condition. Custard apple harvesting starts in the months of October to November. The fruits are harvested in two to three pickings.



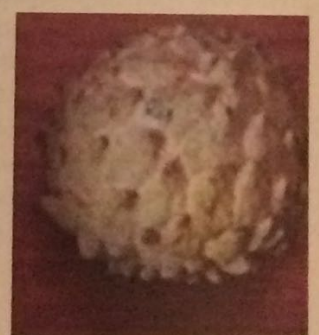
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Island gem



Washington



Pink mammoth

