

FRUIT PRODUCTION: CUSTARD APPLE



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Custard Apple: An Introduction

The Scientific Name of custard apple is *Annona* spp. Its belong to the family Annonaceae. Custard apples are believed to be a native of tropical Americas.

Edible Species of *Annona*

1. *Annona squamosa*: Sugar Apple
2. *Annona reticulata*: The Bullock's Heart
3. *Annona cherimola*: Cherimoya
4. *Annona muricata*: Sour sop
5. *Annona glabra*: Pond apple



Nutrition in Raw Custard Apples (Bullock's Heart)

Nutrient	Unit	Value per 100 g
Water	g	71.5
Energy	Kcal	101
Protein	g	1.7
Total lipid (fat)	g	0.6
Carbohydrate, by difference	g	25.2
Fiber, total dietary	g	2.4
Calcium, Ca	Mg	30
Iron, Fe	Mg	0.71
Magnesium, Mg	Mg	18
Phosphorus, P	Mg	21
Potassium, K	Mg	382
Sodium, Na	Mg	4
Vitamin C, total ascorbic acid	Mg	19.2
Thiamin	Mg	0.08
Riboflavin	Mg	0.1
Niacin	Mg	0.5
Vitamin B-6	mg	0.221
Vitamin A, IU	IU	33
Fatty acids, total saturated	g	0.231

Growing Custard Apple

Climate: Tropical and Subtropical climate. Site should be frost-free and a rainless season should be there during flowering period.

Soil: Sandy or light soil is the most ideal. Heavy soil with proper drainage may also be suitable.

Propagation: Propagation of Custard Apple by seeds. Seedlings may be raised in nursery beds. Vegetative propagation by inarching, grafting or air-layering is also possible.

Planting: Hardened seedlings are transplanted in the main fields. Field is tilled, and organic matter/humus is added to the top soil before planting ; alternatively green manuring may be done to increase soil fertility. Planting is done in pits of appropriate sizes. Plant to plant to distance: 5 m. Watering is done after planting.

Harvesting: Custard apple trees start bearing during the third year of planting. A healthy plant may yield up to 150 good quality fruits as long as 12 years. Harvesting of ripe fruits may be done when fruit skin colour changes from green to slightly brownish/reddish. Ripe fruits can be stored more than a month at 50C. Fruits are ripened in storage. Ripened fruits are rich in sugar.

Disease-Pest Management

Mealy bugs are major insects and can be controlled by the application of organic pesticides. Pink disease, anthracnose and leaf spot are major diseases and can be controlled by Bordeaux mixture spray after removal and destruction of affected parts.



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