

ALL ABOUT SESBAN

BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

Sesban is a small tree growing to 12 m with a cylindrical trunk diameter of about 30 cm. The ovate leaves are alternate, evenly pinnate, and 20-30 cm long. Leaflets are in 20-40 pairs, oblong, pale green 2.5-3.5 cm long. The inflorescence is short, and the flowers are purple, cream or white. The pods swing freely, are slightly curved and contain 10-25 seeds. The seeds are bean-shaped and about 2 mm x 3 mm. The trunk is soft and white.

IMPORTANCE AND USES

The green pods are eaten by humans and livestock. The young leaves are 36% crude protein. Also eaten by man and livestock, and reportedly increase the milk production of cattle. The leaves are made into leaf meal for feeds.

Fresh flowers are used in cooking stews and in salads.

The bark contains a tanning agent, fiber and an extract used medicinally. Gum from the bark has water-proofing capabilities and can prolong the life of fishing tackle. Fishing lines are usually rubbed with the bark.

NUTRIENT VALUE

One hundred grams of edible Sesban contain water (91.02-94.49 g), ash (0.29-0.53 g), Ca (0.05 g), carbohydrates (0.36 g), fiber (6.78 g), Fe (0.18 g), P (0.29-0.53 g), protein (0.008 g), and fat (1.22 g)

PROPAGATION

Sesban is propagated by cuttings, seedlings, direct seeding, and aerial sowing.

SUGGESTED CULTURAL PRACTICES

The land must be cultivated before planting. Holes are dug at 5 m x 5 m distance. For seedlings, the holes must be at least 45 cm deep and 30 cm diameter.

For cuttings, the holes are deeper. Irrigation water is necessary for newly planted seedlings, not for established trees. Mulching can serve as compost and reduce water loss.

PEST AND DISEASE

Young plants are very susceptible to nematodes. Seeds (on the tree or in storage) are readily infested by weevils

HARVESTING

Harvesting is usually done manually or with the use of a special pole to hook the flowers when trees are tall. Individual flowers, flower buds and young pods, or the whole bunch of inflorescences may be picked at one time.

Pods should be harvested immediately when matured.

FOOD PREPARATION

Sesban can be cooked with other vegetables, steamed or ingredient in vegetable salads.

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SESBAN

Katuray

(Sesbania grandiflora)

