

# FGCU Food Forest

## Plant Database

### Bael Fruit (*Aegle marmelos*)

#### Quick Facts

Origin: India  
Description: Medium size canopy tree  
Culinary Uses: Fruit, eaten whole, cut up or juiced  
Harvest: Fruit, March-April  
Flower: Yes, but when?  
Cold Tolerance: 20F

**General Description:** The Bael is a medium sized tree with large spikes on the branches. It can be deciduous. The leaves are small and slightly toothed. New growth is tinted pink. Flowers form in clusters on new growth. The round fruit has a hard rind that turns greyish yellow when ready for harvest. Inside the fruit the pulp is comparable to a mild cooked pumpkin.



- **Native Origin:** Bael trees have been mentioned in writing as far back as 800 BC in India. It grows wild in India, Berma, and other parts of SE Asia. It is considered a sacred tree in Hindu culture.
- **Harvesting Techniques:** Normally, the fruit is harvested when yellowish-green and kept for 8 days while it loses its green tint. Then the stem readily separates from the fruit. A tree may yield as many as 800 fruits in a season but an average crop is 150 to 200, or, in the better cultivars, up to 400.
- **Season of Harvest:** March through April
- **Culinary Uses:** The fruit can be eaten whole, cut up or juiced. Bael fruits may be cut in half, or the soft types broken open, and the pulp, dressed with palm sugar, eaten for breakfast, as is a common practice in Indonesia. The pulp is often processed as nectar or "squash" (diluted nectar). A popular drink (called "sherbet" in India) is made by beating the seeded pulp together with milk and sugar. A beverage is also made by combining bael fruit pulp with that of tamarind. These drinks are consumed perhaps less as food or refreshment than for their medicinal effects.

Mature but still unripe fruits are made into jam, with the addition of citric acid. The pulp is also converted into marmalade or sirup, likewise for both food and therapeutic use, the marmalade being eaten at breakfast by those convalescing from diarrhea and dysentery. A firm jelly is made from the pulp alone, or, better still, combined with guava to modify the astringent flavor. The pulp is also pickled. The young leaves and shoots are eaten as a vegetable in Thailand and used to season food in Indonesia.

- **Nutritional Value:** Bael fruit has lots of nutritional values; it is a rich source of carbohydrates as you can get 31 Grams of carbohydrate from the 100 Gms of bael fruit pulp. It contains protein, beta-carotene, and a precursor of Vitamin A, significant quantities of the B vitamins thiamine and riboflavin, and small amounts of Vitamin C also. Moisture content in wood apple is high as it contains 64.2 per cent moisture so very good for summer season. Its calorific value is 134 and it is also rich in oxalic, malic citric acid and a concentrated tannic acid. Bael fruit leaves have some astringent and carminative properties.

<b>Bael Fruit</b>	
<b>Scientific Classification</b>	
Kingdom:	Plantae
(unranked):	Angiosperms
(unranked):	Eudicots
(unranked):	Rosids
Order:	Sapindales
Family:	Rutaceae
Genus:	Aegle Correa
Species:	A. marnelow

#### **Sources**

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