

FGCU Food Forest

Plant Database

Black Sapote (*Diospyros dignya*)

Origin: Mexico/Central America

Description: The black sapote fruit

size from two to five inches in

Uses: Food

Harvest: November (in Florida)

Flower: borne singly or in groups of 3 to 7 in the leaf axils, are tubular, lobed, white, 3/8 to 5/8 in (1-1.6 cm)

Some have both male and female organs, large calyx lobes and are

gardenia-like scent and a few black specks in the throat of the corolla

Tolerance: Can tolerate some shade,



General Description: The black sapote's flesh is rich and custard-like, with a sweet, mild flavor. Some people find the taste to be like chocolate, which gave the sapote its nicknames, the chocolate pudding tree, chocolate persimmon, and Zapote Prieto (Spanish).

- **Native Origin:** Central America, Mexico, Northwestern South America
- **General History** Black Sapote is frequently cultivated throughout its native range to the coasts of Mexico from Jalisco to Chiapas, Veracruz and Yucatan and in the forested lowlands of Central America. Black Sapote may have been carried to Amboina by the Spanish sometime in the 1690s, and to the Philippines and Southeast Asia sometime in the 1700s, and eventually reached islands in the Pacific, Caribbean, and South America, such as: Hawaii, Malacca, Mauritius, Brazil,

Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. Seeds were sent to the Bureau of Plant Industry of the United States Department of Agriculture from Isle of Pines, Cuba in 1915, and Guadalajara and Oaxaca, Mexico in 1919 and 1920. The Bureau of Plant Industry of the United States Department of Agriculture also received seeds from Hawaii in 1916 and 1917. In Mexico the fruits are common in markets, and black sapote is commonly cultivated; however, black sapotes are decently rare in the United States, even in South Florida where they can be grown without the fear of frost.

- **Distribution:** Tropical and subtropical regions in South, Central, and North America, Asia, the Pacific, and the Caribbean.
- **Season of Harvest:** Summer
- **Culinary Uses:** Sapotes are good sources of vitamin A and vitamin C, are high in potassium, and contain a small content of other vitamins and minerals. Mature black sapote fruit change from a shiny green to dull green color and the lobes of the sepals (called the calyx) reflex upward. Once picked, fruit may take 3 days to 2 weeks to soften up enough for eating quality. When the fruit ripens up, they may be consumed or can stored in refrigeration for up to 1 to 2 weeks.

Black Sapote	
Scientific Classification	
Kingdom:	Plantae
(unranked):	Angiosperms
(unranked):	Eudicots
(unranked):	Asterids
Order:	Ericales
Family:	Ebenaceae
Genus:	<i>Diospyros</i>
Species:	<i>D. nigra</i>

Sources

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs305>

https://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/morton/black_sapote.html