

FGCU Food Forest

Plant Database

Cassava (*Manihot esculenta*)

Origin: Brazil, South America.

Description: Cassava, also known as *Yuca*, is a perennial woody shrub that features starchy tuberous roots and edible leaves. It can reach 10 ft. tall or more at full maturity.

Uses: Food and medicine; animal feed;

Harvest: Year-round. Often harvested and replanted right before the rainy season

Flower: Rare; modern Cassava varieties rarely flower and go to seed.

Tolerance: High drought tolerance and moderate to low cold tolerance. Tolerates poor soils. Requires well-draining soils.

General Description: Cassava, also known as *Tapioca*, *Manioc*, and *Brazilian Arrowroot*, is a perennial woody shrub that can reach 10 ft. tall or more at full maturity. Cassava features starchy tuberous roots and edible leaves, although both roots and leaves must be cooked properly prior to eating.

- **Native Origin:** South America; probably southwestern Brazil.
- **General History:** Cassava, also known as *Tapioca*, *Manioc*, and *Brazilian Arrowroot*, is native to South America, and has been a staple food crop for civilizations throughout South and Central America for thousands of years. In fact, Cassava may have been domesticated in west-central Brazil over 10,000 years ago, and spread throughout the American tropics and subtropics in the last few thousand years. In the 16th century, Portuguese traders brought Cassava from Brazil to various parts of Africa, where it quickly became a staple crop. Today, Nigeria and Indonesia produce the most Cassava, although Thailand, Brazil, and Ghana are close behind. Cassava is popular in home gardens throughout south Florida.



- **Distribution:** Tropics and subtropics worldwide. Cassava is the third largest source of food carbohydrates in the tropics.
- **Season of Harvest:** Year-round in the tropics. Cassava is often harvested and replanted right before the rainy season starts.
- **Culinary Uses:** Cassava roots and leaves are edible once cooked properly. Alcoholic beverages can be made from the roots, too, although the starchy tuberous roots are mostly what Cassava is grown for. Cassava roots can be cooked in many ways, although the most popular way is to chop tubers into 1 in. cubes, boil, then fry or bake in oil. Cassava roots are made into a variety of food products.

Cassava	
Scientific Classification	
Kingdom:	Plantae
(unranked):	Eudicots
(unranked):	Rosids
Order:	Malpighiales
Family:	Euphorbiaceae
Genus:	<i>Manihot</i>
Species:	<i>M. esculenta</i>

Sources

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassava>

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mv042>

<http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00094929/00001>

<http://organic-gardening.site74.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Yam-Leaves.jpg>

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