

FGCU Food Forest

Plant Database

Cherry of the Rio Grande

(*Eugenia aggregata*)

Quick Facts

Origin: Brazil; South America

Description: Evergreen shrub or small tree that grows about 10-20 feet high; has dark green, glossy leaves.

Uses: Food; fruits red to deep purple cherries that can be eaten raw or made into jellies, jams, or juices; freezes well for future use.

Harvest: Summer months.

Flower: White; showy; flowering lasts several months.

Fruit: Oblong; thin skinned; Red to deep purple cherry about 1-2 inches large with 1-2 seeds in the middle.

Tolerance: Moderately drought tolerant; hardy to 20°F; does well in a variety of soil types.



General Description: Cherry of the Rio Grande is a beautiful ornamental shrub or tree native to Brazil. It is evergreen and has dark green, glossy, and waxy leaves; however, it is not a true cherry. The fruit is red to dark purple and can be eaten raw, or made into jellies, jams, and juices.

- **Native Origin:** Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, South America.
- **General History:** Native to Brazil, this species has been highly prized as a large, ornamental shrub with delicious fruits. Cherry of the Rio Grande has been widely grown in southern California where it flowers and fruits throughout the summer months. Decently rare in Southwest Florida; tends to do very well in USDA Zone 10B, and flowers and fruits throughout the summer months. Cherry of the Rio Grande is typically grown from seed, and usually takes 4-5 years to begin fruiting.

- **Distribution:** Tropics and Subtropics; mostly found in South America, but also cultivated in home gardens in California and Florida in the United States.
- **Season of Harvest:** Summer months.
- **Culinary Uses:** Cherry of the Rio Grande is prized for its delicious red to purple fruits and is usually eaten raw; however, jams, jellies, and juices can also be produced from the fruit. Also, the fruits freeze very well for future use in juice smoothies and desserts.

Cherry of the Rio Grande	
Scientific Classification	
Kingdom:	Plantae
(unranked):	Angiosperms
(unranked):	Eudicots
(unranked):	Rosids
Order:	Myrtales
Family:	Myrtaceae
Genus:	<i>Eugenia</i>
Species:	<i>E. aggregata</i>

Sources

<http://edibleplantproject.org/cherryriogrande/>

<http://www.tropicaloasisfarms.com/html/cherry-of-the-rio-grande.html>

http://plantogram.com/product/cherry_of_the_rio_grande/

http://www.desert-tropicals.com/Plants/Myrtaceae/Eugenia_aggregata.html

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