

FGCU Food Forest

Plant Database

Custard Apple (*Annona reticulata*)

Quick Facts

Origin: West Indies

Description: Tree with a rounded or spreading crown and trunk. Flowers, in drooping clusters, are fragrant, slender, with 3 outer fleshy, narrow petals 3/4 to 1 1/4 in (2 3 cm) long; light-green externally and pale-yellow with a dark-red or purple spot on the inside at the base.

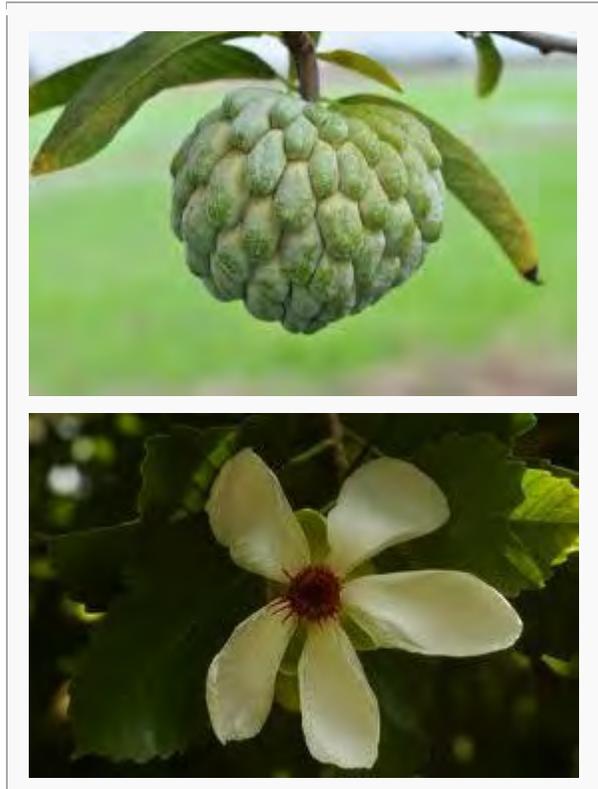
Culinary Uses: Eaten whole, pressed through a sieve and added to milk shakes, custards or ice cream

Harvest: Late winter and spring

Flower: Light-green externally and pale-yellow with a dark-red or purple spot on the inside at the base.

Medicinal Uses: The leaves are given to help boost immune system.

Preferences: The custard apple thrives in low-lying, deep, fertile soil with plentiful moisture and decent drainage



General Description: The trees are large and spreading, shaded by large, green drooping leaves. The tree produces several trumpet shaped flowers and of these flowers, only a small number will contain fruit. The Fruit takes between 20 and 25 weeks to reach maturity in sub-tropical climates where the days are not too hot and the nights not too cold.

- **Native Origin:** The custard apple is alleged to be a native of the West Indies, but it was distributed in early times through Central America to southern Mexico. It has been cultivated and adapted as far south as Peru and Brazil. It is normally grown in the Bahamas and sometimes in Bermuda and southern Florida.
- **Harvesting Techniques:** The custard apple has the benefit of cropping in late winter and spring when the favored members of the genus are not in season. It is picked when it has lost all green color. If picked green, it will not color well and will be of mediocre quality.
- **Season of Harvest:** Late winter and spring

- **Culinary Uses:** In India, the fruit is eaten only by the lower classes, whole. In Central America, Mexico and the West Indies, the fruit is quite prized. When completely ripe it is soft, and the stem and connected core can be effortlessly pulled out. The flesh may be taken from the skin and eaten as is, or served with ice cream. Regularly it is forced through a sieve and added to milk shakes, custards or ice cream.
- **Nutritional Value/Medicinal Uses:** Crushed leaves from this tree are thought to help cure abscesses and ulcers. The unripe fruit is dried, crushed and fights against diarrhea and dysentery. The bark is very harsh and is taken as a tonic and also as a remedy for diarrhea and dysentery. Also, remains of the root bark are filled around the gums to relieve toothache.

Custard Apple	
Scientific Classification	
Kingdom:	Plantae
(unranked):	Angiosperms
(unranked):	Magnoliids
Order:	Magnoliales
Family:	Annonaceae
Genus:	<i>Annona</i>
Species:	<i>A. reticulata</i>

Sources

https://www.taut.purdue.edu/newcrop/custard_apple.html Origin and Distribution.com

<http://era.deedi.qld.gov.au/1653/3/2quecus.pdf>