



Global
Facilitation
Unit
for Underutilized
Species

NONI

(*Morinda citrifolia*)

enabling deployment of underutilized species

What is Noni and where does it come from?

Also known as Great morinda, Indian mulberry, Beach mulberry, and Tahitian noni, noni is a shrub or small tree that belongs to the Rubiaceae family. It is native to Southeast Asia but has been extensively spread by man throughout India and into the Pacific islands. It can also be found in the West Indies. Despite its strong smell and bitter taste, the fruit is nevertheless eaten as a famine food and, in some Pacific islands, even a staple food. The juice has many nutritional benefits.

Noni is widely known as the "Aspirin of the Ancient". It's been successfully used for over 2,000 years in Polynesia, China, India and elsewhere and grows best wherever there is pollution free volcanic soil.



PROPERTIES

Noni fruit has excellent levels of carbohydrates and dietary fiber and is a good source of protein. Noni pulp is low in total fats. The main micronutrient features of noni pulp powder include exceptional vitamin C content and substantial amounts of niacin, iron and potassium. Vitamin A, calcium and sodium are also present.

❖❖ Health

Typically it is taken as a drink to enhance bodily function and support overall good health. Although noni has a century-old reputation for uses in traditional medicine, its properties have not been verified by modern science. *In China, Samoa, Japan, Tahiti, Hawaii, Indochina and Malaysia various parts of the tree (leaves, flowers, fruits, bark, roots) serve as tonics and to contain fever, to treat eye and skin problems, gum and throat ailments as well as constipation, stomach pain, or respiratory difficulties. As for external uses, unripe fruits can be pounded, then mixed with salt and applied to cuts and wounds. The ripe fruits are applied to draw out pus from an infected boil. The green fruit, leaves and the roots have traditionally been used to treat menstrual cramps and irregularities and urinary difficulties. There have been recent applications also for the use of oil from noni seeds because it is abundant in linoleic acid that may have useful properties when applied topically on skin, e.g. anti-inflammation, acne reduction, moisture retention.*

❖❖ Food Preparation

The fruit can be eaten either raw or cooked. Southeast Asians and Australian Aborigines consume the fruit raw with salt or cook it with curry. The seeds are edible when roasted.

❖❖ Other Uses

Noni bark produces a brownish-purplish dye for batik making; on the Indonesian island of Java, the trees are cultivated for this purpose. In Hawaii yellowish dye is extracted from its root in order to dye cloth. The fruit is used as a shampoo in Malaysia, where it is said to be helpful against head lice. In Surinam and other countries the tree serves as a windbreak, as a support for vines and as shade for coffee trees.

GROWING

Noni plants can begin to bear fruit about 9 months to 1 year after planting. Fruits can be harvested at this early stage, although they are generally small and few. Some farmers choose to forgo harvest during the first or second year in favor of pruning back the branches instead. Noni fruits are harvested year round, although there are seasonal trends in the amount of flowering and fruit production that may be affected or modified by the weather and by fertilizer and irrigation. A given noni field is usually harvested from 2-3 times per month.

HARVESTING

Noni fruits are harvested by hand picking the individual fruits from the branches. They are placed in baskets or bags or placed in bins for transport to the processing facility. Noni fruits do not bruise or damage easily, and usually no special padded containers or other precautions are needed to prevent significant fruit damage. Furthermore, exposure of noni fruits to direct sunlight or to warm temperatures immediately after harvest is not a significant concern. In addition, after harvest noni fruits need not be refrigerated.

PROCESSING

Fruits are washed at the processing facility before they ripen fully and turn soft. For juice production, the noni fruits are held at ambient temperature to ripen before they are processed. However, prompt processing for juice is important, for if ripe fruits are allowed to sit for an extended period, they begin to attract unwanted fruit flies, rats and other insects or pests. For processing of noni fruits for powders or other precuts, the fruits may be processed immediately, before they fully ripen. Unripe fruits are easier to work with some types of chopping and drying equipment.





Contribution to social and economic development

Noni farming projects foresee the establishment of new farms. The establishment of new juice processing and food dehydration facilities and the creation of community noni harvest programmes. They conduct training workshops to help expand or create new micro-enterprises and assist in developing and marketing the products.

The exhibits on show are just few of many commercial products made from Noni:

Noni juice
Noni capsules

SOME PRODUCERS / RETAILERS / DISTRIBUTORS

- ❖ Genix - www.camaracuba.cu
- ❖ Innomark Inc - www.innomarkinc.com
- ❖ Natures Products - www.noninz.com
- ❖ Tahitian Noni - www.noni.com
- ❖ Tahitian Noni International - www.tahitiannoni.com



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