

Brazil, Caribbean

- Common names:** **Eng:** cashew nut; **Mwera:** nkorosho; **Swah:** mbibo, mkanju, mkorosho.
- Ecology:** Indigenous to Brazil and the Caribbean. Has since been introduced to most parts of the tropics. It is now an important cash crop grown in plantations. In Tanzania it planted in the coastal plains, mainly on sandy well-drained soils near the sea. However, it does not grow on coral soil. It also grows on similar soils as far inland as Morogoro and Handeni. It can be intercropped with vegetables. The tree may be part of a mixed orchard with mangoes, bananas, coconuts and citrus.
- Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, posts, nuts, fruit (juice, liqueur, wine, jam), medicine, ornamental, shade, soil conservation, dune fixation, windbreak, nut shell oil (varnish, inks, tiles, brake linings), gum (for book binding).
- Description:** A tree to about 10 m with a dense crown, but usually smaller. **BARK:** rough dark brown. **LEAVES:** simple alternate, leathery dark green, oval, **15 cm long, 8 cm wide, rounded tip, wavy.** **FLOWERS:** in terminal clusters, **small and star like, pink-cream,** fragrant. **FRUIT:** hard, **kidney-shaped nuts attached to the base of shiny orange yellow "cashew apple" or "bibo"** (swollen flower stalk). Nuts fall to the ground when ripe.
- Propagation:** Seedlings, wildings, direct sowing, grafting.
- Seed info.:** No. of seeds per kg: 150-300. Germinate in 10-12 days.
- treatment:** immerse seed in cold water for 24 hours; not necessary for fresh seeds.
- storage:** seed should not be stored for more than nine months. nuts in the sun for several weeks before storing or planting
- Management:** Slow growing; lopping, coppicing.
- Remarks:** Flowers used as bee forage produce bitter honey. The outer covering of the nuts contains a poisonous oil so the thin skin must be removed by hand or roasted or burnt before the nuts can be eaten. Deshelling nuts is difficult processing is best done in a factory.



$\times \frac{1}{2}$

