

Artocarpus heterophyllus (A. Integrifolius)

*Moraceae*

Asia

- Common names:** **Eng:** jackfruit; **Swah:** mfenesi, mfenesi mfuu.
- Ecology:** Originates from Asia, probably in the forests of the Western Ghats in India. Today it is widespread in other parts of the tropics and most popular in Sri Lanka. It is mainly grown near the coast in Tanzania and Zanzibar at altitudes of 0-1,000 m, and with rainfall throughout the year, 850-1,500 m. It requires well-drained, deep and highly fertile soils. It cannot tolerate drought or waterlogged soils.
- Uses:** Firewood, timber (furniture, carts, lorry bodies, doors); food (fruit, seed), medicine, fodder (leaves, skin of fruit), shade, gum.
- Description:** A medium-sized evergreen tree with thick branches, to 25 m. The **bole is short**, cylindrical and straight and up to 1 m in diameter in old specimens with **branching beginning less than 2 m from the ground**. **BARK:** rough bark on the bole, grey but smooth on the branches. **LEAVES:** glossy, **oval to 15 cm long and 10 cm wide**. **FLOWERS:** separate male and female, all very small but the female flowers have a stronger smell. The flowers are borne on the trunk or large branches where the fruit—the largest] known—develops. **FRUIT:** massive and irregular "cauliflowery", **yellow-green compound fruit with a spi" thick skin, reaching a record 20 kg in weight and 1 m length**. The flesh is sweet and edible but has an acquired taste. Seeds, up to 5 cm, are edible when roasted.
- Propagation:** Seedlings, bud grafting, air layering; vegetative propagation to select desirable characteristics. Direct sowing preferable due to early growth of the taproot.
- Seed info.:** Seeds are hand-picked from the fruit flesh after drying.
- treatment:** no pre-sowing treatment needed.
- storage:** the seed is viable for a very short period (1 month) because it is very oily.
- Management:** For good fruit yields, space trees 10-12 m apart. Most cultivars fruit in about 8 years. Cut back fruiting twigs after harvesting.
- Remarks:** Avoid planting in flooded areas as the tree may fail to produce fruit. Unripe fruit can be used as a vegetable. Suitable around compounds as a shade tree or support for climbing crops such as peppers.

