

Citrus reticulata (C. nobilis)

Rutaceae

China, S.E. Asia

Trade names: Mandarin, tangerine.

Common names: **English:** Mandarin, tangerine, fancy fruit **Luganda:** mangada.

Ecology: This species appears to have originated in China and has long been cultivated in China and Japan. It reached Europe in 1805 and the USA in the middle of the nineteenth century. Now it grows everywhere in the tropics and has been introduced to Uganda. This citrus can tolerate the lowest temperatures. The loose peel and sweet juice are characteristic. The name mandarin is best used for the yellow-fruited cultivars and tangerine for those with a deep orange rind.

Uses: Food (fruit).

Description: A small tree 2-8 m with a dense top of slender branches and rather **few spines**. **LEAVES:** shiny dark green above, yellow-green below, **oblong to narrowly oval to 8 cm long**, the edge usually with **widely spaced rounded teeth**, the stalk very narrowly winged. **FLOWERS:** in leaf axils, about 2 cm across, smaller than sweet orange, white and single. **FRUIT:** typically yellow to bright red-orange when ripe but some stay green. Fruit are **rounded but flattened, to 8 cm diameter, rind and segments easily separated**, the centre hollow. The orange **juicy pulp around the seeds is very sweet**.

Propagation: The toughest of all the citrus species. It will grow from seeds, seedlings and wildings.

Seed: Squeeze seed out of fruit and sow immediately.

treatment: no treatment.

storage: not recommended.

Management:

Remarks: Performs well in relatively dry areas. Grow with crops or in orchards. Most citrus require nitrogen and phosphorus, and potassium is important as a fruit sweetener.

