

Cyphomandra betacea

Solanaceae

Peru, South America

Common names: **Eng:** tree tomato; **Pare:** mtunguja; **Samb:** maghogwe
Swah: mgogwe.

Ecology: A woody shrub or small tree introduced long ago to many tropical countries where it is sometimes naturalized. In Tanzania it grows between 1,000 and 2,000 m. It does best on deep soils, bearing fruit in about two years **and** remaining productive for several years.

Uses: Food (jam, fruit, vegetable).

Description: A large evergreen shrub or tree to 3 m with **characteristic umbrella-like branching**. BARK: young stems are shiny, old stems with rounded leaf scars. LEAVES: alternate, large, rather **heart shaped, 40 x 30 cm, softly** hairy, drooping in heat, on a long stalk. FLOWERS: in **fragrant** hanging groups from older stems. **Each flower 5-lobed, white-pink** with a darker stripe. FRUIT: in clusters, **egg shaped to 7 cm long**, abundant, on long stems, **shiny orange-red to purple**.

Propagation: Seedlings, cuttings, wildings.

Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: about 100,000.

treatment: not required.

storage: seed can be stored.

Management: Fast growing; coppicing.

Remarks: The fruit is slower to ripen at higher altitudes. The **acid** fruit can be eaten raw or cooked, and quality depends on the variety grown.

