

India

Common names: Eng: sissoo.

Ecology: Found in the foothills of the Himalayas, in high-rainfall areas. Planted along canal banks and rivers it tolerates a variety of soils. In Tanzania the tree has been grown in Muheza (Amani and Longuza) and at Korogwe (Mombo).

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, poles, posts, timber (construction, furniture), tool handles, carving, fodder (pods, leaves), bee forage, soil conservation, soil improvement, nitrogen fixation, shade, ornamental, windbreak, oil (seeds), tannin (bark).

Description: A medium to large tree, up to 30 m, deciduous, with a light crown, trunk often crooked. LEAVES: compound, on 15 cm stalks, about 5 alternate leaflets, each one widest at the base, to 6 cm long with a fine-pointed tip, clear veins above, the stalk flexible. FLOWERS: pink-white in dense clusters to 10 cm. FRUIT: many oblong, flat, thin pods to 7 cm long, pale brown, containing up to 5 seeds.

Propagation: Seedlings, direct sowing, cuttings, root suckers.

Seed info.: No. of seed per kg: 50,000 when clean. Germination rate is about 70%. One kg has 12,000 pieces of pod, *each* containing one seed.

treatment: not necessary.

storage: can be stored for up to two years if kept dry.

Management: Lopping, pollarding, coppicing.

Remarks: Fresh leaves may cause digestive disorders when fed to livestock as dry-season fodder. It is better to convert the leaves into silage. A taproot develops quickly in the seedling and will penetrate stony soils to the watertable, becoming deeply rooted. Long surface roots hold the soil together and so help prevent erosion. The dark brown heartwood is a durable timber and makes excellent firewood and charcoal.

