

Tropical America

Common names: **English:** Avocado pear.

Ecology: A well-known fruit tree indigenous to tropical America and occurring from montane forest to coastal lowlands. In Uganda it is grown in all moist areas.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, food (fruit), shade, cosmetics, oil (fruit).

Description: A densely leafy evergreen tree to 10 m or more with a straight trunk. **BARK:** grey-brown. **LEAVES:** large, **oval and alternate, to 20 cm long**, shiny dark green above, veins very clear, young leaves pink then bright green. **FLOWERS:** in **large terminal heads, pale yellow**, only 1 in 5,000 producing fruit. **FRUIT:** large, **round to pear shaped, to 25 cm long**, hanging heavily on the tree, the central seed surrounded by a thick layer of yellow-green flesh. The outer skin varies from green to purple.

Propagation: Grafted materials (improved varieties), seedlings (sow seeds in pots).

Seed: Eat the pulp of the fruit to obtain seed.

treatment: not necessary.

storage: seed does not store well. Use fresh seed.

Management: Requires no management once established; can be side-pruned to obtain a desired shape.

Remarks: The fruit is very nutritious, rich in fat, protein and vitamins. Bark, leaves and seeds are toxic to browsing livestock. The dense surface-root system competes with those of crops, though crops such as beans can be intercropped with young trees. It is a good money

