

Tropical America

Common names: **English:** Guava **Luganda:** Mupeera.

Ecology: This tree originates from South America, probably Brazil, but is now grown throughout the tropics, including Africa south of the Sahara. In Uganda, it is grown in all Regions of the country including North Eastern Region where it occurs near water around Mt. Kadam. It is a moisture-loving species, requiring rainfall of 1,000-2,000 mm. It is drought resistant but cannot tolerate waterlogging. It grows at a wide range of altitudes in Uganda.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, poles, tool handles, food (fruit).

Description: A small evergreen tree to 8 m, branching irregularly. **BARK:** smooth, pale brown, later peeling and flaking; **young shoots 4-sided.** **LEAVES:** large, **dull and oval to 15 cm long**, side veins prominently hairy below, in opposite pairs. **FLOWERS:** white, about 2.5 cm across, 1-3 together beside leaves, many stamens. **FRUIT:** rounded to 6 cm long, **tipped by remains of calyx, pink, white, or yellow**, depending on the variety. The **sweet flesh** surrounds many hard angular seeds.

Propagation: Seedlings, root suckers, direct sowing on site, wildings.

Seed: No. of seed per kg: about 500,000.

treatment: not necessary.

storage: can be stored in sealed containers in a cool place.

Management: Fast growing; pollarding, lopping, pruning, coppicing. Prune branches and roots if near crops.

Remarks: The fruit is often attacked by fruit fly. It is rich in vitamin C. The leaves do not decompose easily to add organic matter to the soil. The fruit is a useful source of cash for farmers. Trees bear fruit in 3-4 years and continue to fruit for up to 30 years. The wood is termite resistant.

