

# JACKFRUIT

*Artocarpus heterophyllus*

Moraceae

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## ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

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### Description

The origin of this tall, leather-leafed tree is probably India. It grows best in hot and humid tropical and subtropical climates. They produce the largest of all fruits borne on trees, up to 1 meter (3 ft) in length and 18 kg (40 lbs) in weight. This is a wind and insect pollinated plant and requires cross-pollination with other cultivars.



Jackfruit *Artocarpus heterophyllus*

### Uses

Jackfruit trees bear versatile fruits that may be eaten cooked or fresh. Young, fresh leaves and male flowers can be cooked as a vegetable. The leaves and rind of the fruit are fed to cattle. All parts of the plant exude sticky, white latex that is used for household cement or mixed with vinegar and used as a poultice for healing of wounds and snakebite. Extracts of its roots, ashes, pith, wood shavings and seeds have medicinal properties and the heartwood makes a yellow dye. The wood is resistant to termites, fungi and bacteria and used for fine furniture on a par with teak and mahogany.

### Common Names

- Spanish
  - Jackfruit

### Cultivation

- Altitude: 0-1,500 m (5,000 ft)
- Soil: Well-drained, rich, deep; it cannot tolerate "wet feet". If the roots touch water, the tree will not bear fruit or may die.
- Temperature: Sensitive to frost
- Rainfall: drought-sensitive; if rainfall is deficient, the tree must be irrigated.

### Harvesting and Seed Production

Propagation is by seed, grafting or cuttings. Seeds should be started in large plastic pots and planted in the field when they reach around 1 meter (2-4 ft) tall. Water well, but do not fertilize until new growth shows. The seeds should not be held longer than 30 days and be soaked in water for 24 hrs before replanting. Germination requires 3 to 8 weeks. Plants from seed can reach production size in four years. Fruits reach full size in one to three months. Once picked, an unripe fruit may be held to maturity in 3 to 10 days at 75- 80° F (24-27° C). Avoid contact with latex by coating hands with vegetable oil.

### Pests and Diseases

Some insects like mealy bug and scale will infect dead wood or wounded areas. Minor diseases that occur on fruit or leaves do not affect a plentiful crop. Root rot can be a serious problem in slow-draining areas.

### Cooking and Nutrition

Before the fruit turns from green to greenish yellow or greenish brown, it may be cooked and eaten. When ripened, the rind and hard core can be removed and fed to cattle and the banana/pineapple flavored interior flesh can be cooked as a vegetable or eaten fresh. Other uses are as a fruit juice, chutney, jam, dried and fried chips, candy or distilled drink. The seeds must be thoroughly cooked, and then can be roasted, boiled, canned, baked, ground into flour or added to curried dishes. Jackfruit is a good source of potassium and Vitamin A while also low in fat and calories.

### References

Morton, J. 1987. Jackfruit. p. 58-64. In: Fruits of warm climates. Julia F. Morton, Miami, FL.

<http://ecocrop.fao.org/ecocrop/srv/en/cropView?id=459>