

WHITE HOARYPEA

White Tephrosia

Tephrosia candida

Fabaceae

ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

Origin

This 2-3 m (7-10 ft) high member of the pea family, White Hoarypea, was first grown in the tropical foothills of the Himalayan mountains of India. Since then it has been introduced into Southeast Asia, the West Indies, South America and some African countries. It is a nitrogen-fixing, perennial shrub with high-protein leaves that are suitable for inclusion in fodder for cattle and pigs. The crushed seed meal can be used to supplement food for goats during the dry season when other protein sources are unavailable and expensive. A powder made of dried leaves will deter root weevils by inhibiting larval growth. *Tephrosia candida* can be established by direct-seeding and used for firewood, as a living fence (goats tend to avoid grazing it) and intercropped to provide some shade for growing cassava, coffee, pineapple, coconut, citrus or maize.

Common Names

- French
 - indigo blanc
 - indigo sauvage
- Javanese
 - enceng - enceng
- Indonesian
 - kapeping badah
 - poko tom

Cultivation

Though considered an invasive species in Hawaii and some nearby islands, *Tephrosia candida* is slow to establish. It grows well at altitudes up to 1600 m (5,000 ft). Its deep roots help prevent erosion on poor, sandy, acidic soil, or even mine spoils. This shrub tolerates a climate range within the tropical/subtropical latitudes of 23°N - 10°S where the temperature is 18° - 28° C (60° - 82° F) and it receives 700-2500 mm (28-70 in) of rainfall. It will grow well with soil pH from 3.5 to 7.0.

Harvesting and Seed Production

At the start of the rainy season, before planting, the seeds can be soaked in water for 4-5 hours to speed up germination. After two years the plant begins to flower and produce hairy pods filled with speckled, black seeds. The length of this flowering season varies from 2-12 months in different parts of the world. Pods should be harvested as the first ones begin to open as overripe pods will shatter and seeds will be lost. The dry seeds store well for several years in a cool dry place.

Pests and Diseases

Indonesia has had problems with the tephrosia beetle eating young pods but the problem has been solved through use of insecticides.

Cooking and Nutrition

Tephrosia candida is only suitable as a food supplement for cattle, pigs and goats, NOT humans.

References

Plants for a Future

ICRAF.2012. Agroforestry Tree Database:Tephrosia candida.World Agroforestry Center.Available:<http://www.worldagroforestrycentre.org/sea/products/afdbases/af/asp/SpeciesInfo.asp?SpID=1606#Uses>