



History of Moringa

Moringa oleifera is the best known of the thirteen species of the genus Moringaceae. Moringa was highly valued in the ancient world. The Romans, Greeks and Egyptians extracted edible oil from the seeds and used it for perfume and skin lotion.

In the 19th century, plantations of Moringa in the West Indies exported the oil to Europe for perfumes and lubricants for machinery. People in the Indian sub-continent have long used Moringa pods for food. The edible leaves are eaten throughout West Africa and in parts of Asia.⁵

Identification

Species: *Moringa oleifera*

Family: Moringaceae

Range: Native to the Indian sub-continent, and naturalized in tropical and sub-tropical areas around the world⁹

Characteristics: Deciduous tree or shrub, fast-growing, drought-resistant, average height of 12 meters at maturity⁵

Varieties

Twelve other Moringa species are known as well:⁵

M. arborea

M. borziana

M. concanensis

M. drouhardii

M. hildebrandtii

M. longituba

M. ovalifolia

M. peregrina

M. pygmaea

M. rivaie

M. ruspoliana

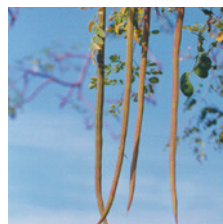
M. stenopetala

All parts are useful

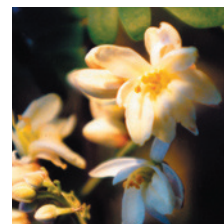
Every part of the Moringa tree is said to have beneficial properties that can serve humanity. People in societies around the world have made use of these properties. While the focus of this book is on the leaves, other parts of the tree are also worthy of further study.



Leaves:
Nutrition
Medicine



Pods:
Nutrition
Medicine



Flowers:
Medicine



Seeds:
Water purification
Medicine
Cooking oil
Cosmetics
Lubricant



Bark:
Medicine
Gum:
Medicine



Roots:
Medicine