Editorial

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Editorial Note on *Pentadesma butyracea*

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Editorial

Pentadesma butyracea is a tree native to tropical Africa's forests, ranging from Sierra Leone to Cameroon. It has a variety of applications, the most important of which is the production of a type of butter known as "kpangnan butter," which is similar to shea butter. The wood is used in cabinetry and construction. It is also known as the African butter tree.

Pentadesma butyracea Sabine (Clusiaceae) is a multipurpose ligneous forest species. It is found throughout Africa, from Guinea-Bissau to the west of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *Pentadesma butyracea* is found in forest galleries and along waterways in central and northern Benin. The *Pentadesma butyracea* tree produces a fruit consisting of pulp and seeds. The seeds are the most popular part of the fruit nowadays because they contain a buttery almond. The rural population used *Pentadesma butyracea* butter in cosmetics and soap production. Because of its yellow colour, hard texture, relatively sweet taste, softening, lubricating, and healing properties, this butter is mostly used in food preparation, cosmetic, and therapeutic applications. Comparative studies on *Pentadesma butyracea* and shea butters revealed that *Pentadesma butyracea* butter is clearly superior to shea butter on an organoleptic level. The oil content of Pentadesma butyracea butter was 419.0 g/kg, the crude protein content was 44.0 g/kg, the lysine content was 3.2 g/kg dry matter, the methionine content was 1.6 g/kg, and the cysteine content was 1.5 g/kg.

Edible Uses

The seeds are used to produce an edible fat. Air-dried seeds have 32-42 percent solid fat, which can be extracted by pounding and cooking. It ranges in colour from pale to dark brown, is almost tasteless, and has a pleasant odour. It is edible and, to some extent, resembles shea butter (*Vitellaria paradoxa*), but it is free of bitter latex and does not go rancid. It is used in cooking and in the production of margarine. The fat is composed of 53.6 percent oleic acid, 45.2 percent stearic acid, and 1.2 percent palmitic acid, as well as a variety of amino acids.

Before fully ripe, the seeds are said to be edible, but once mature, they become extremely bitter or sour. When fully ripe, they are occasionally used as an adulterant in cola nuts. Cola nuts contain caffeine and are used as a stimulant by chewing them or making them into drinks [K].

Ripe fruits have a sweet, yellow pulp that is edible, but unripe fruits are bitter. When the fruit is immature, it is said to be edible, but by the time it is fully ripe, it is too hard to eat. The fruits are broadly ovoid in shape, measuring 15 cm long by 10 cm across. Each fruit contains 3 to 10 seeds in a yellowish pulp. When the fruit is cut, a copious yellow thick juice, similar to the exudate from the bark, is exuded. Cooked and eaten as a vegetable, the leaves. The leaves are especially popular among nursing mothers because they are said to boost milk production.

Medicinal Uses

- The bark is said to have aphrodisiac, purgative, and vermifuge properties. This purgative effect is achieved through the use of a decoction. Diarrhea and dysentery are treated with the bark.
- To treat fevers, an infusion of the bark is used as a wash. A macerate of the bark is used to treat cutaneous parasites. The bark's latex is applied to the skin as a treatment for skin parasites. The bark and roots of Congo material have been found to contain traces of flavonins, saponins, tannins, steroids, and terpenes.
- As a vermifuge, a root decoction is used. During weaning, an infusion of the powdered roots is used to wash children. The fat derived from the seeds is an excellent base for topical medications. Its use alleviates chest pain, cough in children, strain, and abscesses.
- Nursing mothers consume the leaves as a vegetable, which is said to increase milk flow, make the milk more digestible, and aid in teething. After roasting and crushing the leaves, they are given to children to relieve constipation.

Other Uses

A fat derived from the seed is used to make soaps, candles, and

other products. The oil extracted from the seed is used to make unguent for the skin and hair, as well as to kill lice, jiggers, and other insects. The bark has yellow, resinous latex that is more abundant on the inside. It dries orange-red in colour. The roots are used as chewing sticks in Liberia. Chewing sticks are made from the young stems.