

Fruits for the Future

R7187: Promoting selected tropical fruit trees

Indigenous fruits play an important role in the nutrition of children in rural and urban areas alike. However, they are often undervalued and underutilised, as more exciting exotic fruits become accessible. And since most indigenous fruit trees in the developing world have never been cultivated on-farm, there is only scant and dispersed knowledge about their production, propagation and processing.

Researchers of the Southampton-based International Centre for Underutilized Crops (ICUC) and local and regional partners have taken on the mission to study the cultivation and processing of a number of underutilised fruits in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia and of promoting this knowledge to the local people. Through a series of peer-reviewed monographs, technical notes, posters in local languages and training courses for farmers and extension officers, the team is in dialogue with stakeholders at several levels.

Two of the most important ingredients of ICUC's success are the communication in local languages and the field testing of materials with a select group of stakeholders. For the West African fruit safou



A fruit market in West Africa. Photo: Elke Peiler

(*Dacryodes edulis*), known as the African plum, the team organised both a French and an English language workshop to accommodate the two language groups in Cameroon. During the workshops, the participants – farmers, NGO staff and radio and newspaper journalists – discussed the extension materials that the team had produced: a colourful poster, and a training manual consisting of ten easy-to-use training sheets. To get some hands-on experience themselves, the participants had a go at various vegetative propagation methods, which back home, they can use for other species as well.



A safou stall in Makenene, Cameroon. Photo: Hannah Jaenicke



The *Dacryodes edulis* poster in English.

“The poster is colourful and uses simple language. It summarises the different propagation methods well and can also be used for training people who cannot read.”

Workshop Participant, Bamenda, Cameroon

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