

FGCU Food Forest

Plant Database

Neem Tree (*Azadirachta indica*)

Quick Facts

Origin: Indian subcontinent

Description: Neem is in the Mahogany family (Meliaceae), and is also known as “Indian Lilac” and “Nimtree”.

Uses: Source of medicinal oils; leaf vegetable; mosquito repellent; pest and disease control; fertilizer; lubricant; toiletries.

Harvest: Year-round.

Flower: White, fragrant; arranged in axillary panicles up to 10 inches long; inflorescences branch up to the third degree and bear 150-250 flowers; both protandrous and male flowers can be found on one tree.

Fruit: Smooth olive-like and oval or nearly roundish in shape (1.0in x 0.5in); very fibrous and yellowish-white on the inside; hard, white inner shell (endocarp) with one to three seeds with brown seed coat.

Tolerance: Drought resistant; heat resistant; not cold tolerant



General Description: The Neem Tree, or Nimtree, is a very hardy, drought resistant tree that has many different uses. The fruits and leaves contain many medicinal properties and have been utilized for thousands of years. Neem is used as a natural pesticide and insect repellent. Neem trees are also used for shade and to combat desertification.

- **Native Origin:** Indian subcontinent; Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Southern Iran, etc.
- **General History:** The leaves, fruit, and bark of the Neem Tree have been utilized for thousands of years, mostly by people in India and Pakistan, but also in certain parts of Africa. Neem products are used for anti-bacterial, anti-viral, and anti-parasitic purposes. Neem products include toothpaste and other toiletries, gum and oil for food preparation, cosmetics, insect repellent, lubricants, fertilizers, resin, bark, and honey. Neem is the main ingredient in many non-pesticide management products used as alternatives to synthetic pesticides. Neem has been an important part of Ayurvedic tradition in India for thousands of years, besides being great drought-tolerant shade trees.
- **Distribution:** Sub-arid to sub-humid areas; Asia, Africa, Caribbean.
- **Season of Harvest:** Year-round.
- **Culinary Uses:** Although it is mostly used for medicinal purposes, there are a few recipes that are popular in India. A dish called *Veppampoo charu* (Neem flower rasam) is made from neem flowers, whereas an appetizer called *nim begun* is made from tender shoots and young leaves that are fried in oil with eggplant, and served with rice.

Neem Tree	
Scientific Classification	
Kingdom:	Plantae
Division:	Magnoliophyta
Order:	Sapindales
Family:	Meliaceae
Genus:	<i>Azadirachta</i>
Species:	<i>A. indica</i>

Sources

<http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00076417/00001>

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in197>

http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/sustainability/pdf/GH_ENY350.pdf

<http://plantsflorida.blogspot.com/2008/07/neem.html>

https://www.daff.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/63168/IPA-Neem-Tree-Risk-Assessment.pdf