



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

Cashew



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Botanical Name	:	<i>Anacardium occidentale</i> L.
Tamil Name	:	Mundiri
Sanskrit Name	:	Bhallatak/Kaju
English Name	:	Cashew

Distribution and Habitat

Cashew (*Anacardium occidentale* L.) is a nutritious dense crop that comes under the family *Anacardiaceae*. Cashew is cultivated as a cash crop. It was originated in Brazil but now cultivated in all tropical regions. It is a small- medium sized tree with a dome-shaped crown. It grows in stony, sandy, loamy and heavy soils at elevation around 600 m. Leaves, alternate, obovate to obovate-oblong, up to 20 cm x 15 cm, leathery, reddish-brown when young, later shining dark green.



The inflorescence is a panicle or corymb up to 26 cm long, flowers small, pale green, turning reddish, with five slender, acute petals 7 to 15 mm long. The fruit (Cashew apple) is an oval or pear-shaped accessory fruit or false fruit develops from the receptacle of the cashew flower. The true fruit is a kidney shaped nut (drupe), the root system of a mature tree consists of a tap-root and a well-developed, extensive network of lateral and sinker roots, after grown from seed.

Parts used: Leaves, bark, nuts, fruit, shell oil.

Phyto-constituents

Tri-terpenoids, phenolics, essential oils, xantho-protein, flavonoids, antho-cyanins, carotenoids, ascorbic acid, carbohydrates, and minerals.

Uses

Cashew nuts are edible and nutritious; cashew apple is used for juice, jams, and candies. Wood used for fuel, charcoal, and low-quality timber; bark used in tanning and as an adhesive.

Medicinal uses

In the traditional system of medicine, cashew plant is used to treat various disorders such as diarrhoea, fever, inflammation, liver diseases, bronchitis, skin diseases and malarial fever. It has a variety of medicinal and pharmacologically active substances. The bark, leaves, and shell oil of *A. occidentale* have therapeutic importance. Bark is used to relieve toothache and sore gums, treat dysentery, diarrhoea and piles. Bark is used for infectious, inflammatory and oxidative stress conditions (Anuja et al. 2015). Leaves are used to treat eczema, venereal diseases, bronchitis, cough, toothache, fever, malaria and hypertension. Root is used to treat cough, stomach pain, tooth decay and diarrhoea. Nut oil has anti-fungal and anti-hypertensive activity; it can be used in healing cracked heels, kidney disorder and cholera (Hassan et al. 2016). Cashew fruit is tasty and rich in minerals, vitamins, and some essential nutrients. It has high vitamin C, nearly five times higher than oranges and also with high minerals content. The plant possesses diverse biological activities such as anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, insecticidal and nematocidal, analgesic, anti-diarrheal, anti-pyretic, anti-diabetic, anti-malarial, and anti-ulcer activities.



Photo link: <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/anacardium-occidentale-cashew>

Green Health

As part of the regular activities, Yoga classes were conducted at the Green Rameswaram office premises — for gentlemen in the morning and for ladies in the evening. On an average, about 25 participants attended these sessions regularly.

