



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

Lychee/ Litchi



Dr. A. Abirami
Programme Officer
C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre
Chennai

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| Botanical Name | : | <i>Litchi chinensis</i> Sonn. |
| Tamil Name | : | Vilachi |
| Sanskrit Name | : | Lichika |
| English Name | : | Lychee/ Litchi |

Distribution and Habitat

Lychee (*Litchi chinensis* Sonn.) is a sub-tropical, juicy and delicious fruit which belongs to family Sapindaceae. It is native to South China, widely cultivated in India. Lychee is an evergreen plant having small stout trunk growing up to 15m tall. Leaves, 5-8 in., long, pinnate; leaflets 4-8, elliptic-oblong to lanceolate, abruptly pointed. Leaflets leathery, smooth, glossy, dark-green on the upper surface and grayish-green beneath; 2-3 in. long.



Flowers tiny, petal-less; greenish-white to yellowish up to 30 in. long in clusters. Fruits loose, 2-30 strawberry-red, rose, pinkish or amber round balls, tinged with green, aromatic, oval, heart-shaped or nearly round, about 1 in wide and 1.5 in. hanging in clusters. Fruits have a thin, leathery, rough or minutely warty skin, flexible and easily peeled when fresh, glossy, succulent, thick, translucent-white to grayish or pinkish fleshy aril which usually separates readily from the seed, seed is 1-3 .3cm long and 0.6-1.2cm wide.

Parts used: Leaves, fruit, roots and seeds

Phyto-chemical constituents

Organic compounds – Ascorbic acid, citric acid, isobutyl acetate, isovaleric acid, and guaiacol; Flavonoids – Epicatechin, procyanidin, epigallocatechin, leuco-cyanidin, malvidin-3-acetyl-o-gluoenin, quercetin, phlorizin, kaempferol, onychin, catechin, and rutin; Fatty acids – Palmitic acid, linoleic acid, dihydrosterculic acid and protocatechuic acid; Glycoside

– Saponin; Amino acid – Glutathione and α -methylene-cyclopropylglycine; Phenolic compounds – Chlorogenic acid, caffeic acid, trans-cinnamic acid and Gallic acid.

Uses

Fruits are used in food industries in various forms like juice or health drink, honey, lip balm, wine, jam. Locals in China, India, Nepal, and Bihar utilize this as health drink as well as an edible fruit.

Medicinal uses



Litchi is one of the most popular fruit that is grown commercially for its juicy arils and nutritional benefits in various countries. Medicinal properties of different parts of *Litchi chinensis* for combating various diseases have its history way back from traditional system of medicine (Srivastava et al., 2018). It has gained a wide acceptance for its pharmacological activities against various ailments. Traditionally the fruit has been used to cure stomach ulcers, obesity and diabetes, relieve coughing, to kill intestinal worms as well as possess analgesic action.

Root, bark, and flowers decoctions are used as a gargle to alleviate ailments of the throat. Ingested litchi in moderate amounts or its decoction is said to relieve coughing and to have a beneficial effect on gastralgia, tumors, and enlargements of the glands. Leaves exhibits anti-oxidant, analgesic and anti-inflammatory activity as well as hepato-protective activity. Flower reported as anti-oxidant, cardiovascular, cyto-toxicity and anti-lipase activity. Pericarp shows antioxidant and anti-cancer potential. Seeds are used as an anodyne in neuralgic disorders, hernia, lumbago, ulcers, and for intestinal troubles. Pharmacological activity of seeds possess antioxidant, anti-cancer as well as anti-virus activity and also essential to reduce blood sugar and lipid levels. The fruits reported to be anti-inflammatory, aldose reductase inhibition activity, antiviral, hepato-protective activity and many other benefits. It can also provide sustainability and could be considered as organic super-fruit in both Asian and non-Asian countries (Sun et al. 2021).

Photo link: <https://nationwideplants.com/products/brewster-lychee-tree>

