



NOTES FROM THE UNAFAS CVP TREE NURSERY, ON HOW TO GERMINATE AND NURSE USEFUL TREE SPECIES OF CAMEROON

Christmas tree

Scientific Name – *Terminalia mantaly*

A tree that is now common in Cameroon, and that can easily be grown from seeds collected underneath a mature tree. The fruits look like little bullets, they are green, quite hard, fibrous inside. Each fruit contains one seed inside, a nut something like a mango nut.

It is best to collect the fruits when the flesh has rotted away, you'll find them lying on the ground, not far from the parent tree, in places where the rain has carried them. Otherwise collect fruits as they fall from the tree in the dry season and soak them in water until the flesh gets rotten, then cut or rub all the flesh away and sow the fibrous nut that remains. Sow many more than you want to grow.

Nursery technique

- Prepare a deep ridge or seed bed. Water well, so that soil even at the bottom is moist.
- Scatter seeds on the surface, it is best if they are not touching each other, and cover with a layer of soil.
- Water well.
- When seedlings have produced just a few leaves, transfer them to bags or containers. If the roots are longer than the stems, trim the roots to make them equal.
- Seedlings and mature trees produce a tap root, so
 - do not leave seedlings too long before potting otherwise they will grow deep roots and be difficult to remove.
- Seedlings in the nursery should be spaced so that they do not overlap each other.
- If roots protrude from the bottom of the bags, then prune them back, and re-pot if necessary.
- They can be planted out when 30-40 cm tall, or up to 1.5 m if the roots are regularly trimmed.

NOTES

Well known as an attractive shade tree – but beware, that if planted closer than 20m to walls, cemented or paved areas the roots can crack and damage these structures.