

Cajanus cajan

[Synonyms : *Cajan cajan*, *Cajan inodorum*, *Cajanum thora*, *Cajanus bicolor*, *Cajanus cajan* var. *bicolor*, *Cajanus cajan* var. *flavus*, *Cajanus flava*, *Cajanus flavus*, *Cajanus indicus*, *Cajanus indicus* var. *bicolor*, *Cajanus indicus* var. *flavus*, *Cajanus indicus* var. *maculatus*, *Cajanus luteus*, *Cajanus obcordifolia*, *Cajanus pseudocajan*, *Cajanus striatus*, *Cytisus cajan*, *Cytisus cajanus*, *Cytisus guineensis*, *Cytisus pseudocajan*]

ANGOLA PEA is a perennial shrub (often grown as an annual or biennial). Probably native to Africa it has small pea-like, red striped, yellow, brown or purple flowers.

It is also known as *Adhaki* (Sanskrit), *Ærteboenne* (Danish), *Ærtebønne* (Danish), *Ambrevade* (French), *Arhar* (Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi), *Bisillah hindîyah* (Arabic), *Cachito* (Spanish), *Caiano* (Italian), *Catjang pea*, *Cay dau chieu* (Vietnamese), *Congo bean*, *Congo pea*, *Cumandái birái* (Paraguayan), *Dahl*, *Dau thong* (Vietnamese), *Dhal*, *Dhol*, *Duwärt* (Swedish), *Feijão-guandu* (Brazilian, Portuguese), *Frijol de árbol* (Mexican, Spanish), *Frijol de la India* (Spanish), *Frijol guandul* (Spanish), *Frijol quinchanco* (Spanish), *Gandul* (Argentine, Puerto Rican, Spanish), *Gandules* (French, Spanish), *Guando* (Brazilian, Spanish), *Guandu* (English, Portuguese, Spanish), *Guandú* (Spanish), *Guandul* (Spanish), *Guisante de Angola* (Spanish), *Guisante de paloma* (Spanish), *Guisante gunga* (Spanish), *Guisante gungo* (Spanish), *Gungo pea*, *Harilik tuvihernes* (Estonian), *Kacang Bali* (Indonesian, Malay), *Kacang gude* (Indonesian, Malay), *Kacang hiris* (Malay), *Kacang kacang dal* (Malay), *Kacang kayu* (Indonesian, Javanese, Malay), *Kandulu* (Telugu), *Kadiós* (Filipino/Tagalog), *Katjan* (Malay), *Kyyhkyherne* (Finnish), *Lûbyâ súdânî* (Arabic), *Ma hae* (Thai), *Mu dou* (Chinese), *Njugu* (Kikuyu), *No eye pea*, *Paripu* (Tamil), *Pigeon pea*, *Pigeon pea bush*, *Pijonpii* (Japanese), *Pisello d'Angola* (Italian), *Pisello dell tropico* (Italian), *Planta de guandú* (Argentinian, Spanish), *Pois Angol* (French), *Pois cajou* (French), *Pois d'ambrevade* (French), *Pois d'Angola* (French), *Pois du Congo* (French), *Puerto Rican bean*, *Puerto Rico pea*, *Pwa Kongo* (Creole), *Quinchocho* (Spanish), *Quinchoncho* (Spanish, Venezuelan), *Rahar* (Nepalese), *Rata-tora* (Singhalese), *Red-gram*, *Sândaèk dai* (Khmer), *Sândaèk klông* (Khmer), *Sândaèk kroëb sâ* (Khmer), *Strauchbohne* (German), *Straucherbse* (German), *Struikerwt* (Dutch), *Tabios* (Filipino/Tagalog), *Taubenerbse* (German), *Thua maetaai* (Thai), *Thua rae* (Thai), *Thuvara* (Malayalam), *Thuvarai* (Tamil), *Thwàx h'è* (Laotian), *Toor* (Hindi), *Tua-re* (Thai), *Tur* (Hindi), *Tuur* (Hindi), *Tuvar* (Hindi), and *Tuver* (Gujarati, Hindi).

Warning – eaten in quantity, the raw seeds can have a soporific effect.

Cajan is a corruption of a local Malay name for Angola pea, *katjan*.

Seeds found by archaeologists in some of the 7th Dynasty Egyptian tombs show that angola pea was being cultivated in Egypt over 4,000 years ago.

The slaves transported from west Africa introduced it to the Caribbean, and some records note that the shrub was planted along the sides of the alleys running through the sugar cane fields.

The fresh plant is used as fodder and hay for livestock more generally. In Madagascar the leaves are also fed to a species of silkworm. It has also provided food for the lac insects and thus has been a vehicle for shellac.

The plant is sometimes grown as ground cover to combat soil erosion, as well as to provide a vine support eg. for vanilla (*Vanilla planifolia*), and as a green manure. But perhaps one of its most exciting attributes discovered by researchers in North America at the turn of the 20th/21st Centuries lays in certain compounds which have been identified in it (and in *Mucuna deeringiana* a close relative of cowhage, *Mucuna pruriens*). Apparently these can be used by farmers for weed control and it is likely that they may even be able to regulate what has turned out to be a worldwide scourge, the invasive coco grass (*Cyperus rotundus*).

Angola pea stems have been used occasionally for thatching, as well as for fuel. (The stems used to be converted into charcoal for gunpowder.) In northern India the stems have also been used for making baskets.

Young seeds (peas) are eaten raw as a vegetable, or the older dried, split peas (as pulses) are added to curries and vegetable soups. In India angola pea is only second to chick pea (*Cicer arietinum*) in popularity, where the split seeds are used to make dhal.

Today it is cultivated commercially for green manure, for seed crop and for the production of poor quality lac.

Medicinally, an infusion of the leaves has been used to treat colds. In Africa the leaf infusion has also been employed as a treatment for diarrhoea and smallpox, and as a gargle or mouthwash.