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Dacryodes edulis

[Synonyms : *Canarium edule*, *Canarium saphii*, *Canarium saphu*, *Pachylobus edulis*]

BUSH BUTTER is a tree. Native to tropical western Africa (particularly Congo and Nigeria) it has edible purple fruit.

It is also known as African pear, Bush butter tree, Eben tree, Native pear, and *Pia* (Sierra Leonean).

The tree is believed to be endangered in the wild in some parts of the humid tropics.

Edulis is Latin (eatable).

Locally the plum-sized fruit (which are said to have a taste reminiscent of avocado, *Persea americana*) are eaten raw, roasted or boiled. They are usually salted and eaten as a vegetable and often accompany curries. When staple foods such as yams are in short supply (for instance during the rainy season in Nigeria) these fruit often come into their own and are eaten with boiled or roasted maize.

The trees are cultivated to varying degrees for their fruit for local use. Some research was being carried out during the mid-1990s into the practicability of encouraging their growth and development on a commercial scale. From this it has been realised that not only could the fruit and the honey become export commodities but that the fats in the fruit pulp could be suitable for making margarine and could be of interest in drug processing. Not only that as the lightweight resinous wood could also be welcomed by the furniture industry.

Livestock are often fed on the leaves and oily seeds.