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Dovyalis hebecarpa

[Synonyms : *Aberia gardneri*, *Aberia gardnerii*, *Dovyalis hebecarpa*, *Roumea hebecarpa*, *Rumea hebecarpa*]

CEYLON GOOSEBERRY is a shrub or tree. Native to India and Sri Lanka it has cherry-like dark purple fruit.

It is also known as *Aberia* (Cuban and Central American), Ketambilla, *Ketembilla* (Singhalese and Thai), and Kitembilla.

Hebecarpa is derived from Greek *hebe* (youth, down of puberty) and *carpo-* (fruit) components with reference to the soft downy fruit.

The acid-tasting fruit with their juicy gooseberry-tasting (*Ribes uva-crispa*), purple pulp are usually cooked sweetened for eating (sometimes as an ingredient in meat or fish dishes) or they are made into preserves, jams and puddings. In Asia the fruit are also added to arrack (with sugar) to produce a sherry substitute. The trees can be a source of honey particularly in the Caribbean. The Hawaiians seem to have devised several recipes for jams and butters, and the Israelis are said to make the fruit into preserves for export.

In Florida however interest in the fruit seems to be limited now – although records suggest that following its introduction to the southern North American States at the beginning of the 20th Century sufficient enthusiasm was generated at that time to take it on into countries such as Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean, Honduras on the Central American mainland and the Hawaiian islands in the Pacific.

Ceylon gooseberry is sometimes cultivated as hedging because of both its thorny and vigorous nature.