

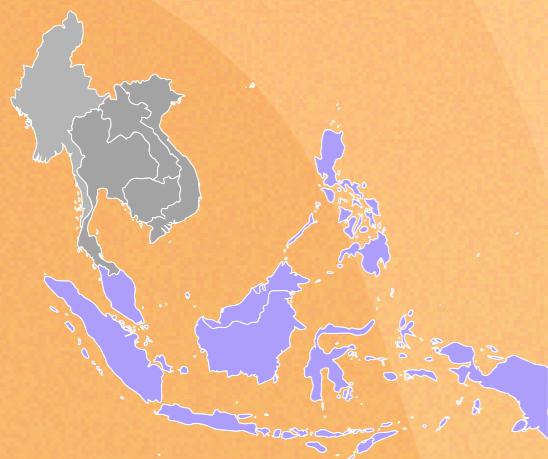
Metroxylon Sagu L. The species

Also known as:

Sago, saksak, sakhu, rumbia, lumbiya and pohon sagu.

Geography

Sago palm trees are native to tropical Southeast Asia, namely Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia and the Philippines.



Sago The starch



Energy: 331.5 kcal per 100g EP

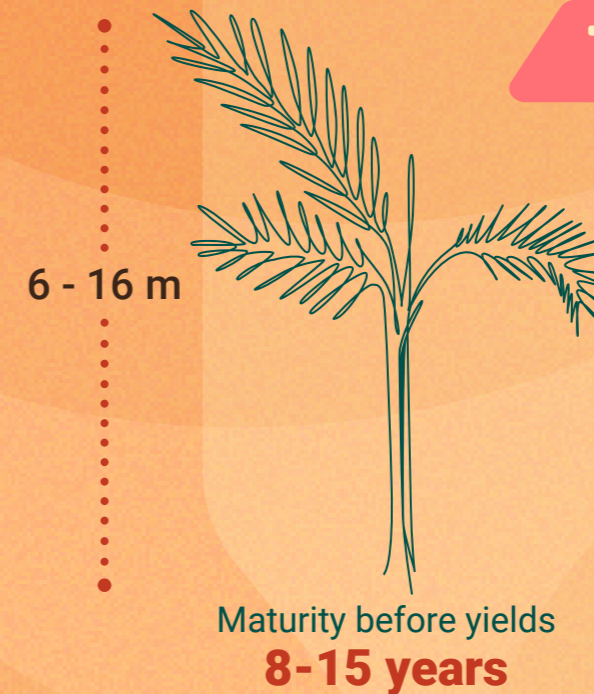
Iron
Magnesium Calcium

CHARACTERISTICS

Sago starch is the main staple food for over a million people on the islands of New Guinea, Maluku, Borneo, South Sulawesi and Sumatra. It only flowers once in its lifetime before dying, and the tree is cut down during this time to harvest its starch.

OTHER USES

Almost every part of the tree can be used including the trunk (which produces the starch), fronds, palm heart and bark.



The tree

Sago starch can be cooked and eaten in various forms including pancakes, pearls (similar to tapioca), and 'papeda,' a glue-like paste made by mixing the starch with boiling water.

Palm fronds and fibers may be used for roof thatching, mat weaving and basket making.

Bark can be used as a flooring material and the hard outer trunk is used for construction.

Because *M. sagu* grows so well in poor soils, it is an ideal food tree to cultivate on degraded lands. Their deep root systems aid in soil rehabilitation and erosion prevention. The young palm trees also grow spines and can be cultivated in fence-like rows which act as pens for livestock or barriers against potential trespassers.

Increasing demand for sago starch to manufacture biodegradable plastics and other products could provide

additional income for smallholder farmers