

South Pacific Commission

Community Health
Services

SOUTH
PACIFIC
FOODS

Leaflet
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3



Mango

A favourite fruit

Mango, maqo, aam, mang'ga, ui, wewei — these are all names of a favourite fruit that grows wild on many Pacific islands. When in season, they seem to belong to the children. Even before the mangoes are ripe, children can be seen high in the tall mango trees picking and eating these delicious fruits.

But mangoes are also a fruit for adults. The whole family can enjoy fresh juicy mangoes picked from the tree or bought at the market whenever they are in season. This nutritious fruit is healthier, tastier and cheaper than sweets or lollies bought at the store.

Mangoes can be eaten fresh, or included in some recipes similar to ones given here. Whatever way they are used, mangoes add good value and flavour to family meals.



Tall trees and tasty fruits

The mango tree has the scientific name *Mangifera indica* and is a member of the cashew family. It can grow to 15 to 18 metres (50 to 60 feet) tall and is thickly covered with narrow, dark green leaves.

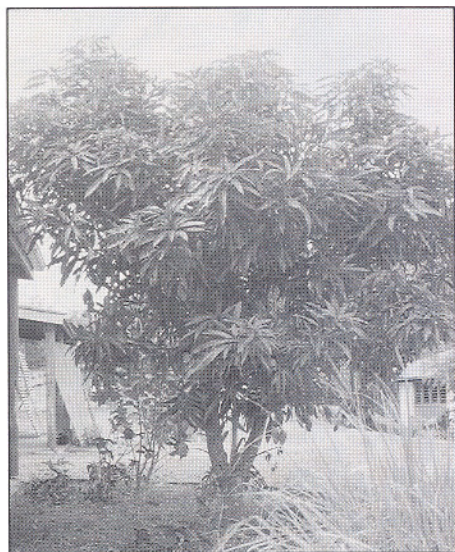
Mangoes are best grown from grafts or budded plants. This ensures a true variety and a healthy plant. For more information, contact your local agriculture officer.

Mango trees begin bearing fruit when they have been growing for about six years. The fruit usually ripens during the summer rainy season. Sometimes trees will have heavy crops every other year,

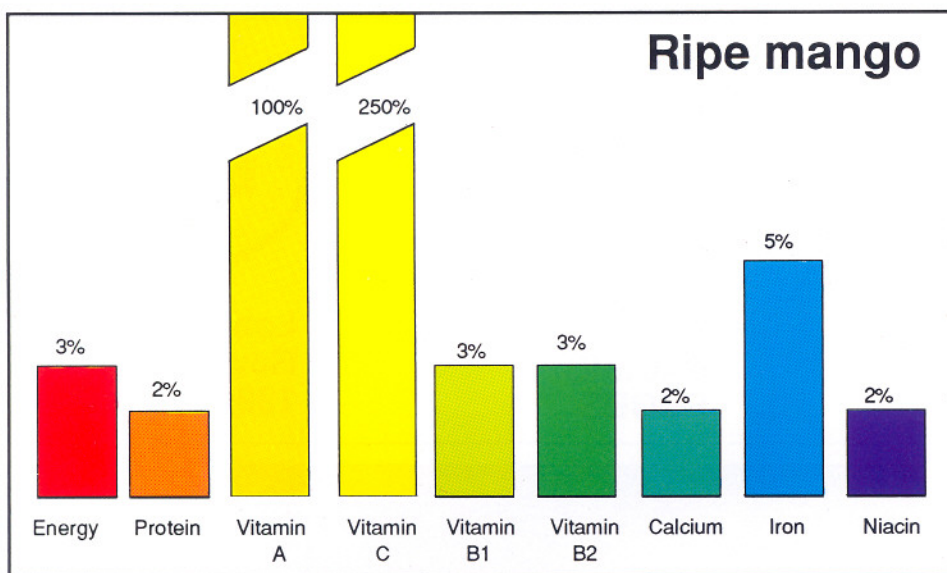
bearing much fruit one year and little the next. After a tree is about forty years old, it bears less fruit each year.

Different varieties of mango fruit are found in the Pacific. They are different sizes, shapes and weights. They can be green, yellow, orange, red or a mixture of colours.

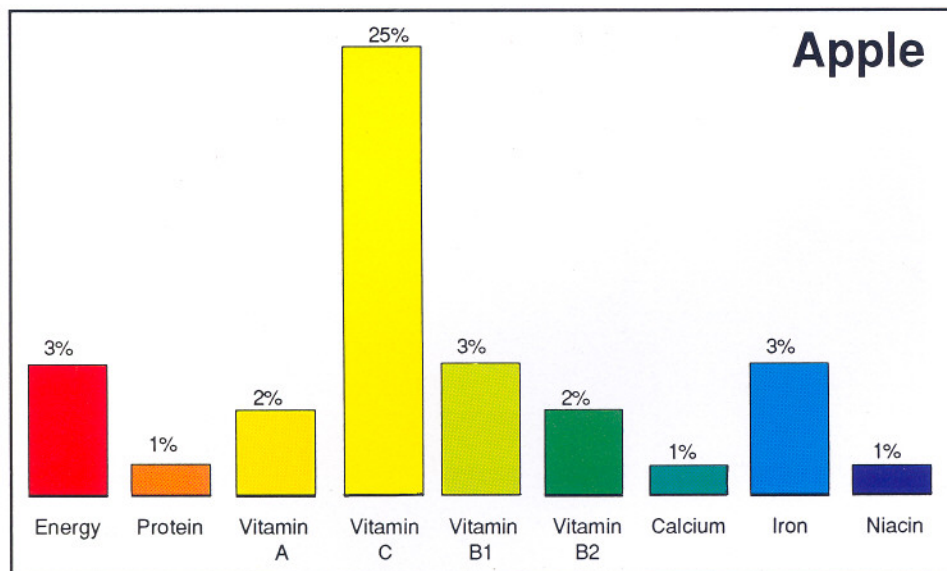
The best mangoes are smooth and juicy with their own special flavour, but the many varieties all taste and feel different. It is difficult to make rules about which type of mango to use, because some kinds of mangoes grow on some islands and not on others. Local experience and experiments can help decide which mangoes are best in which recipes.



Tall bushy mango trees grow wild on many Pacific islands.



Percentage of daily needs of a child (1—10 yrs) filled by one small ripe mango



Percentage of daily needs of a child (1—10 yrs) filled by one medium-sized apple

A health and protective food

Ripe mangoes are an excellent source of **Vitamin A**, which is needed for proper growth, healthy eyes and protection from disease. Green mangoes contain smaller amounts of Vitamin A. Mangoes are high in **Vitamin C** as well. Vitamin C keeps the body tissues strong, helps the body to use iron, and aids in chemical actions in the body. The amount of Vitamin C is different in different kinds of mangoes, but a green mango usually has more than a ripe one. Children who eat green mangoes will get a lot of Vitamin C, but because green mangoes are hard to digest, they may also get upset stomachs.

Mangoes are more nutritious than many imported fruits. As the bar chart shows, one small ripe mango gives the body much more Vitamin A and Vitamin C than one medium-sized apple. When mangoes are so easy to pick or cheap to buy, paying high prices for apples is a waste of money.

A food for babies

Because it is soft and full of vitamins, ripe mango is an excellent food for babies. Babies need to be given soft foods, as well as breast milk, when they are four to six months old. Mango juice or mashed ripe mango is a good food for babies.

Mashed mango must first be strained so that the stringy part of the mango does not choke the baby.

To make mango juice: press a little ripe mango flesh through a clean wire strainer or a clean cloth, then add some cooled boiled water. Do not add sugar.

Because mango has a strong taste, babies often do not want to eat it the first time they try it. Mothers should choose mangoes with a mild flavour and keep trying until their babies learn to like them.

A variety of uses

Mangoes are best when picked ripe from the tree, but mangoes picked when still green but almost ripe will continue to ripen if they are kept in a cool dry place. Once mangoes are fully ripe they must be eaten straight away or kept in a refrigerator.

Eating ripe mangoes fresh is the most nutritious way to use them. They are good for breakfast, for dessert, or as a snack. They may be flavoured with lemon or lime juice or mixed with other fruits.



Mangoes may also be cooked. They can be used in almost any recipe requiring a sweet fruit. But, because different kinds of fruit contain different amounts of water, the amount of water or other liquid required during preparation and cooking may have to be changed.

Since mangoes are seasonal (that is they are not easy to get all year round) they can be preserved by drying. Dried mangoes are excellent snacks for children and are healthier and better than lollies and sweets.

Dried mangoes

Green or half-ripe mangoes
Masala, curry powder or other spices (optional)

1. Peel mangoes and cut into slices (any left-over pieces may be used in the mango chicken sauce).
2. Sprinkle the mango slices with spices if desired.
3. Spread slices out on a clean tray or banana leaves. Leave in the sun to dry for 2 to 3 days. Turn the slices over 2 or 3 times each day so that they dry evenly. If flies are a problem, cover the slices with netting.
4. Dried mango will keep for several months when stored in a tightly sealed jar, tin or plastic bag.
5. Dried mangoes make an excellent snack food, especially for children.



Mango drink (Otai, Tonga)

Six servings:

1 coconut
2 cups mashed ripe mango
3 cups water

1. Crack the coconut, letting the coconut water pour into a bowl.
2. Grate the coconut into the same bowl.
3. Mix 1 cup of the grated coconut with the mashed mango.
4. Add 3 cups of water to the leftover coconut, mix thoroughly, then squeeze out the cream.
5. Strain coconut cream into mango mixture and stir.
6. Serve cold.

Mango and pawpaw relish

Four servings:

2 cups ripe but firm mangoes (washed and chopped)
2 cups half-ripe pawpaw (peeled, chopped)
1 fresh red chilli (finely chopped)
1 cinnamon stick

1. Combine all ingredients in a pan.
2. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer for twenty minutes until mixture thickens.
3. Cool and store in a clear container.
4. Serve with meat or fish and cooked root crops.

Note: This will keep about one week, or about a month if you have a refrigerator.

Green mango salad

Four servings:

4 small green mangoes
1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups coconut cream
2 tablespoons lemon juice or vinegar
1 small onion, chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

1. Wash, peel and grate the mangoes.
2. Mix the coconut cream and lemon juice or vinegar in a bowl.
3. Add the grated mango and chopped onion and mix well. Add salt and pepper to taste.
4. Leave to stand for at least 10 minutes before serving.

Mango chicken

Six servings:

1 large chicken
2 large onions, finely sliced
2 large tomatoes, sliced
2 carrots, sliced
1 cup chopped dark green leaves (optional)
2 tablespoons cooking oil
3 cups mango sauce
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water

Sauce:

4 cups ripe or half-ripe mango slices
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup coconut cream

1. Prepare mango sauce first by cooking mango slices in water until soft.
2. Add coconut cream and cook for 5 minutes longer. Set aside.
3. Cut the chicken into serving portions and remove the skin.
4. Lightly fry the sliced onions in oil for 2 minutes. Add the chicken pieces and cook for a further 5—10 minutes.
5. Add the tomatoes, carrots, mango sauce and water and cook for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally.
6. Add the chopped green leaves and cook for a further 5—10 minutes.
7. Serve hot with cooked taro, sweet potato, breadfruit or brown rice.

Note: The sauce can be used with meat as well as chicken, and can also be eaten as a dessert.

Mango nut bread

Six servings:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup margarine
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
2 eggs
2 cups self-raising flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped nuts
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup mango puree
1 tablespoon lime juice

1. Cream margarine and sugar.
2. Add eggs.
3. Stir in dry ingredients.
4. Mix mango puree and lime juice and add to the egg mixture.
5. Bake in a loaf pan at 350° for one hour.
6. Mango bread is better if it is cut two or three days after baking.

Sweet and sour vegetables

Six servings:

6 cups of chopped mixed vegetables (any vegetables can be used, e.g. pumpkin, green beans, carrots, green pepper, tomatoes)
3 tablespoons cooking oil
4 large onions, chopped
4 half-ripe mangoes
1 cup water
1½ cups thin coconut cream
Salt and pepper to taste

1. Fry the onions in the oil for 5 minutes.
2. Add the chopped vegetables, water and coconut cream.
3. Lightly fry for about 5 minutes or until the vegetables are half cooked. (Note: do not over-cook the vegetables.)
4. Wash and peel the mangoes. Cut them into slices.
5. Add the mango slices to the vegetables and cook for a further 2 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste.
6. Serve hot as a vegetable with fish or meat.

Supreme fruit salad

Six servings:

2 cups coconut cream
1 tablespoon sugar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 cups ripe mangoes
2 ripe bananas
1 cup chopped fresh pineapple
1 cup chopped avocado
1 cup seedless grapes
6 lettuce leaves

Grated coconut

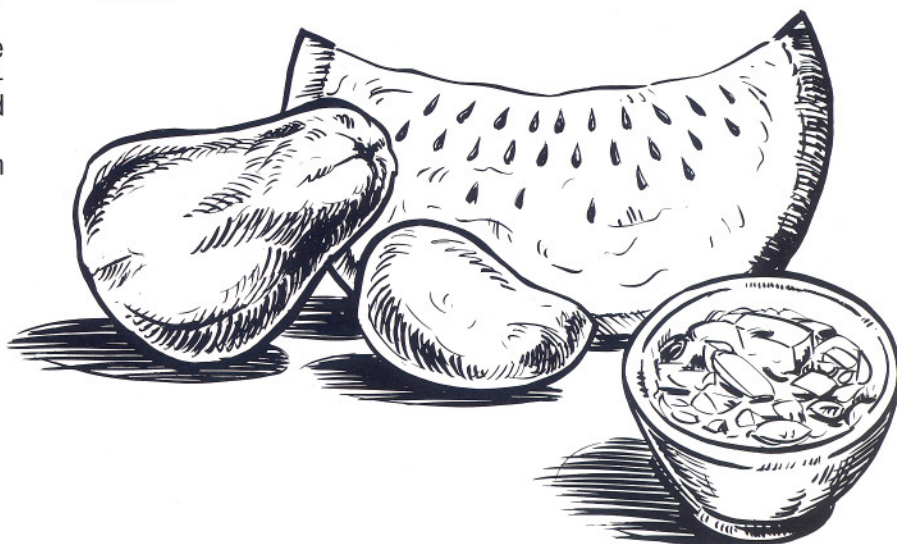
1. Make a dressing by mixing coconut cream, sugar and lemon juice.
2. Immediately before serving, chop up fruit and stir in dressing. Mix well.
3. Serve on crisp lettuce leaves.
4. Sprinkle with fresh grated coconut.

Fresh fruit salad

Six servings:

2 ripe mangoes
1 small ripe pawpaw
1 small ripe pineapple
1¼ cups fresh lime or lemon juice
2 ripe bananas
Any other available fruits, e.g. guava, oranges, passionfruit
1 cup thick coconut cream

1. Wash and prepare all the fruit — peel and remove seeds from pawpaw, remove the skin from pineapple, peel bananas and oranges, etc.
2. Chop all fruit into small pieces and mix together in a bowl. Add the lemon or lime juice and mix well.
3. Serve with coconut cream immediately or after chilling.



This leaflet is the third of a series devoted to the uses of local Pacific foods. Other leaflets available in this series are:

Leaflet 1 – Taro
Leaflet 2 – Pawpaw
Leaflet 4 – Guava
Leaflet 5 – Cassava
Leaflet 6 – Green leaves
Leaflet 7 – Banana
Leaflet 8 – Coconut
Leaflet 9 – Breadfruit
Leaflet 10 – Pineapple
Leaflet 11 – Citrus fruits
Leaflet 12 – Pumpkin
Leaflet 13 – Sweet potato
Leaflet 14 – Yam
Leaflet 15 – Nuts and seeds
Leaflet 16 – Legumes
Leaflet 17 – Fish
Leaflet 18 – Seafoods

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