

From passion fruit to passion juice



In Burundi, the production of passion fruit (*Passiflora edulis*) has soared in recent years as a result of joint efforts by fruit juice processors and fruit and vegetable exporters. It is grown throughout the country and given, a potential production of one tonne per hectare, output could reach 145,000 tonnes.

The National Centre for Food Technology (*Centre national de technologie alimentaire*) in Bujumbura has drawn up a simple set of processing guidelines to enable all producers to select quality products, and use a viable method of juice processing. There are ten steps in all, from the weighing of the fruit (to calculate what the output will be) to its conservation. First, the fruit is washed in large tanks of water. The fruits rise to the surface, where unsuitable ones (unripe, damaged, or diseased) can be removed. Then the stalk is discarded, prior to cutting the fruit lengthwise with a knife. Using a spoon, the flesh of the fruit is scraped off the peel. This is manual work and requires considerable labour. The fruit pulp is then warmed up until the seeds turn black. The seeds are separated from the pulp, which is then mixed with water in a centrifuge or extractor, and filtered. At this stage, water is added (to dilute the pulp), and sugar, according to taste. The final sieving of the juice has to be done with great care, to ensure the removal of any remaining residues from the sugar or seeds. The type and conditions of bottling will depend a great deal on the method adopted for sterilisation: either by

standing a filled bottle in a bain-marie (in a pot over boiling water), or in a covered stainless steel cooker. After sterilisation, the juice should be allowed to cool for a few minutes, since the taste and colour will change if it stays at high temperatures for very long. The cooling water should be slightly chlorinated, to prevent micro-organisms entering the container. Passion fruit juice can be stored at average temperatures of 25 to 28°C for three months. It should be consumed within 24 hours of opening the bottle.

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The many facets of the banana tree

- The fruit can be served up as a puree, snack (dried slices and chips in Honduras and Nigeria), jam, vinegar, in bread, beer (Uganda), ketchup (Philippines), and baby food. It is also commonly found in muesli cereal mixes in Europe.
- The peel or 'skin' is rich in starch, cellulose, sugars, pectin, minerals, proteins and vitamins. The inner surface of the skin is distilled into an aromatic essence used in pharmaceuticals and perfumes.
- The leaves are a valuable source of proteins, vitamins, and cellulose and may be used as a light laxative. In Asia, they are used as an accompaniment to rice and meat dishes.
- The stem contains starch and is used industrially (in textiles, cigarette paper, paper money, and tea bags). It is also another source of sugar, and, on the world market, is less expensive than cane and beet sugar. In Kenya and the Philippines, the fibre is used in making sacks, lamp-shades, baskets and toys.



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