

Jackfruit

History

This unusual fruit comes from Asia. A jackfruit is the largest fruit grown on a tree- in fact, it grows on the trunk of the tree. It takes 5-7 years before a tree will produce fruit, but once it begins, the tree will grow 150-200 fruits a year. Some fruits weight more than 100 pounds. The fruit is picked in the summer and fall before they fall off the tree and become overripe.

A jackfruit contains lots of excellent nutrition. Unlike most fruit, jackfruit has protein, which aids in growth and makes you feel fuller for longer. They are easy to eat, as they can be roasted, dried, ground, creamed, or just consumed fresh. It is a very popular meat substitution. The flesh is actually thousands of flowers that have fused together. You can buy jackfruits at specialty or ethnic grocery stores. Since jackfruit is an exotic fruit to Americans, it comes at an increased price. It is sold canned or fresh and has a light peach or pear-like flavor. Its texture is similar to that of applesauce or an overripe banana. Although native to India, jackfruit often goes to waste there. It grows rampant, but many people consider it a less desirable fruit, and let it rot.



Language Lesson

Asian countries each have a different name for the jackfruit.

- *Jaca* in Portugal.
- *Chakka pazham* in India.
- *Kathal* in Bangladesh.
- *Kanun* in Thailand.
- *Nangka* in Malaysia.

Fun Facts

- Breadfruit, another starchy, potato-like fruit, is cousins with the jackfruit.
- A jackfruit tree belongs in the mulberry family.
- The jackfruit tree is of value because of its strong timber.
- The tree bark has an orange color which is used to dye monks' robes.
- In Sri Lanka, is it called "the tree of rice."
- A sticky rubbery-like substance can be collected from the tree and is used in latex products.



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