

Vengai

Commonly known as the Indian Kino Tree, is a deciduous tree native to India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. It is also known regionally as Malabar Kino, Vijaysar.

Size

The Indian Kino Tree typically reaches heights of 15 to 30 meters, with a maximum known height of around 40 meters under ideal conditions.

Stem

The stem of the Indian Kino Tree is robust and covered with a thick, grey-brown bark that exudes a reddish resin known as kino. This resin has been used traditionally for its astringent properties.

Cultivation practice

Pterocarpus marsupium requires specific conditions to thrive, including a warm climate and ample space to accommodate its size.

Planting

Select a location with full sun exposure and dig a hole large enough to accommodate the root ball. The best time to plant is during the rainy season when the soil is moist.

Climate and soil

The tree occurs in tropical regions and thrives well in open sun under moderate rainfall of 80–200 mm. It prefers fertile, deep clayey loam soil with good drainage. It can tolerate excessive temperatures in summer.

Watering

This tree is drought-tolerant once established but requires regular watering during the initial growth phase.

Sun Requirements

Full sun is ideal for a vengai tree, which means it should be planted in an area that receives at least six hours of direct sunlight daily. This will ensure optimal growth and health of the tree.

Pruning

Pruning should be done to remove dead or damaged branches and to maintain the desired shape. The best time to prune is during the dormant season. Use clean, sharp tools to make precise cuts.

Propagation

Propagation is typically done through seeds, which should be sown in a well-draining growing medium and kept moist until germination.

Pests and Problems

Vengai can be susceptible to pests such as termites and beetles that may attack the wood. Treatment involves the use of appropriate insecticides and regular monitoring to prevent infestations. The tree is generally hardy and resistant to most diseases.

Crop maturity and harvesting

The tree is harvested after 10–15 years for production of heartwood.

Kino gum is collected through an incision in the bark before the logging of the tree and dried well in the shade.

Yield

Each mature tree yields approximately 500 kg of dry heartwood after 10–15 years. Thus, an estimated 750–800 quintals/hectare yield is obtained.

Uses:

This tree is highly valued for its medicinal properties, particularly in Ayurvedic medicine, and is also recognized for its durable hardwood. The heartwood extract, known as kino, has been traditionally used to treat various ailments, and the wood is sought after in furniture making and construction.

*(The yield will be varied based on edaphic, climatic factors and management practices)