



FYN Garden Q & A Series

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Yards & Neighborhoods



FYN Topic: Black Sapote Tree

Question: We recently moved into a new home and found a mystery tree in the backyard. We have asked a few nurseries what it is and the closest that someone has come up with is a xapote tree. However there are far too many differences to be sure. One of them being the fruit looks too big, the size of a grapefruit! Also, we recently picked the fruit wondering if it was ripe. The flesh was the color and texture of a granny smith apple and was hard like un-cooked squash. Can you help us identify the tree?
Email from Luba L.

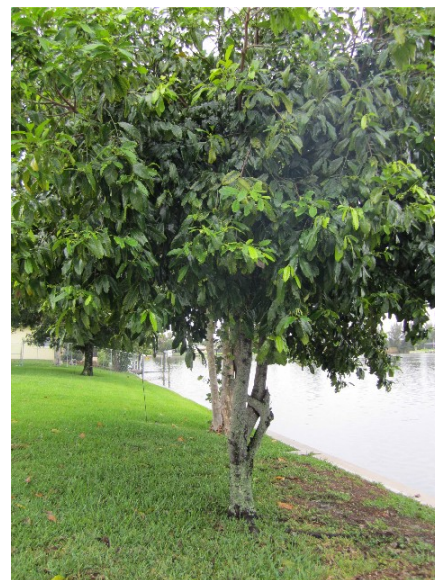
Answer: The extension staff identified your mystery tree as Black Sapote (*Diospyros digyna*), a type of persimmon. The attractive tree is native to Eastern Mexico and Central America and don't bear fruit for the first 5-6 years. Sensitive to cold temperatures, the edible fruit normally ripens in our winter or early spring months and is often smaller (the size of a tennis ball). The rind is inedible, starting out olive-green and ripening to a deep, yellowish-green. Fully ripe, the edible pulp should be completely black in color and have a flavor and texture like chocolate pudding. Fruit is tomato-like and used for custards and ice cream. To learn more about this and other tropical fruits grown in South Florida, attend this year's extension event: 'Taste of Lee' on Saturday, June 30, 2012 from 9AM to 2PM at the First Baptist Church in Ft Myers.



Black Sapote Fruit



Black Sapote Fruit & Seed



Black Sapote Tree

Useful Links

<http://www.floridayards.org>
<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>
<http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>
<http://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu>

Thomas Becker is an extension agent for the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) program at the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the Horticulture Help Desk at 533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. or by emailing Extgardener@leegov.com. Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>

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