

# Longan

*Dimocarpus longan* / *Euphoria longana*



Common names	Mata Kucing Siam, dragon eye, longana, longanier, oiel de dragon, kelengkeng, lengkeng, mata kucing, kyek mouk, mora, mien, lam nhai, nam nhai, lamyai pa, long nhan, nhan.
Origin	Native to southern China. Cultivated throughout the tropics and subtropics, but primarily in Thailand, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Australia, and in the USA, Florida and Hawaii. Belongs to Sapindaceae family.
Description	The tree is handsome, erect, 9-12 m in height and 14 m in width, with rough-barked trunk 76.2 cm thick and long, spreading, slightly drooping, heavily foliated branches.
Growth Habitat	The tree is adapted to a subtropical environment with warm, humid summers and cool, dry winters. Nevertheless, it doesn't tolerate temperatures below 32F (0C), and temperatures of 26 to 28F (-2 to -3C) can cause severe damage or death to young trees. In the tropics, longan can be grown from sea level to 1,800 feet (549 m) altitude.
Foliage	Leaves evergreen, alternate, paripinnate, 4-10 opposite leaflets, elliptic, ovate-oblong or lanceolate, blunt-tipped;

	10-20 cm long and 3.5-5 cm wide; leathery, wavy, glossy-green on the upper surface, minutely hairy and greyish-green beneath. New growth is wine-colored and showy.
Flowers	Flowers staminate, pistillate and hermaphroditic, small, whitish, produced in terminal or axillary panicles. Flowers pale-yellow, 5-6-petalled, hairy-stalked, larger than those of the closely related species.
Fruits	Fruits round, 0.5-1 inch (1-2.5 cm) in diameter, with a rough, light brown peel and a sweet, translucent, whitish pulp surrounding a smooth black seed. Seed round, jet-black, shining, with a circular white spot at the base, giving it the aspect of an eye.
Soil	The longan is adaptable to many different soil conditions, but it does best on rich soils that are well drained and on the acid side.
Pruning	Pruning requirements are minimal and should be limited to removing dead growth and shaping as desired.
Fertilization	The trees are fertilized after the fruit harvest and during the blooming season, at which time the proportion of nitrogen is reduced. Fresh, rich soil is added around the base of the trees year after year.
Propagation	Longan may be propagated by seed, cuttings, air layers or grafting. The seeds lose viability quickly and should be kept moist or planted promptly. Air layering is the most common method of propagating but the resulting trees have weak root systems, and may be blown over in strong winds. Grafting methods used include cleft, side veneer and approach.
Harvest	Fruit is harvested in clusters. Individual fruits can clipped off later and packed in polyethylene bags. Partially ripe fruits can not be ripened after picking.

<p>Nutritional Properties</p>	<p><b>Nutritional composition per 100 g longan fruit</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Carbohydrate</td> <td>16-25 g</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fat</td> <td>0.1-0.5 g</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Protein</td> <td>1 g</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Calcium</td> <td>2-10 mg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phosphorous</td> <td>6-42 mg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Iron</td> <td>0.3-1.2 mg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vitamin A</td> <td>28 IU</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vitamin B1</td> <td>0.04 mg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vitamin B2</td> <td>0.07 mg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Niacin</td> <td>0.6 mg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vitamin C</td> <td>6-8 mg</td> </tr> </table>	Carbohydrate	16-25 g	Fat	0.1-0.5 g	Protein	1 g	Calcium	2-10 mg	Phosphorous	6-42 mg	Iron	0.3-1.2 mg	Vitamin A	28 IU	Vitamin B1	0.04 mg	Vitamin B2	0.07 mg	Niacin	0.6 mg	Vitamin C	6-8 mg
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<p>Health Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Longan is used as remedy for stomach ache, insomnia and amnesia.</li> <li>- The fruit is said to invigorate the heart and spleen, nourish the blood and have a calming effect on the nervous system.</li> <li>- A spoonful of longan tonic made of equal quantities of longan flesh and sugar simmered in water till it is reduced to a syrup consistency is recommended twice a day.</li> <li>- In Vietnam, the "eye" of the longan seed is pressed against snakebite in the belief that it will absorb the venom.</li> <li>- The seeds are administered to counteract heavy sweating, the pulverized kernel, which contains saponin, tannin and fat, serves as a styptic (substance that draws together or constricts body tissues and is effective in stopping the flow of blood or other secretions).</li> <li>- Fresh fruit is consumed to reduce fevers, and the dried</li> </ul>																						

	<p>fruit as a cure for insomnia. Leaves contain quercetin, with antioxidant and antiviral properties, and are used in the treatment of allergies, cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.</p>
Commercial Uses	<p>Longan fruit is consumed fresh, dried, frozen and canned. Crushed seeds produce foam, which is used as shampoo. The wood is used in the construction of furniture and other articles. The tree is also planted as an ornamental. Leaves and flowers are sold in Chinese herb markets but are not a part of ancient traditional medicine. Dried flowers are exported to Malaysia for medicinal purposes. Dried longan fruit is used to make liqueur and can also be used to infuse non-alcoholic drinks.</p>
Food Suggestion	<p>For drying, the fruits are first heated to shrink the flesh and facilitate peeling of the rind. Then the seeds are removed and the flesh dried over a slow fire. The dried product is black, leathery and smoky in flavor and is mainly used to prepare an infusion drunk for refreshment.</p> <p><b>Longan Dessert</b></p> <p><u>Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-3 oz dried longan</li> <li>• 6 cups water</li> <li>• 6 dried red dates</li> <li>• 12 ginkgo nuts</li> <li>• 5 pieces snow fungus (soaked until soft)</li> <li>• Sugar to taste</li> </ul> <p><u>Method:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bring water to boil.</li> <li>2. Add the dried longan, red dates, ginkgo nuts, and snow fungus.</li> <li>3. Boil in low heat for 30-45 minutes or until the water turns brown in color.</li> <li>4. Add sugar to taste.</li> <li>5. Serve warm or cold with ice cubes.</li> </ol>