

Food plants for healthy diets in Papua New Guinea



Food gardens and good nutrition must always remain
our top priority for all people in Papua New Guinea



Food Plants International

"Helping the Hungry Feed Themselves..."

...by being good stewards of God's amazing natural resources"

Food plants for healthy diets in Papua New Guinea



In a land full of beautiful, tropical, fruit, vegetables, nuts and root crops, sadly many people are starting to grow temperate “European” vegetables as they think they are more “sophisticated” or better. This is a tragedy for the health and well-being, of the people and the nation. Many of these introduced vegetables are much lower in nutrients, do not suit tropical climates without special care and attention, and cause people to spend money buying seeds and fertilisers and sprays to keep them growing.



It is time for Papua New Guinea to be proud of its own tropical foods. They are God’s gifts to the nation.



Healthy diets



To stay healthy all people and especially children, should eat a wide range of food plants.

This should include some plants from each of the food groups – energy foods, growth foods and health foods.

Then each of the nutrients required by our bodies will be met in a balanced manner.

Energy food



Kaukau

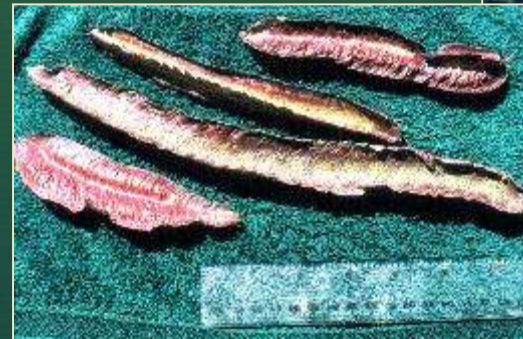


Health food

Growth food



Food security



To be sure that gardens and food supplies don't fail in bad seasons, a range of local food plants should be grown.

And to be sure that food doesn't become short in some seasons, people should grow a range of different food plants, planted at different times throughout the year.

This should include fruit & nut trees.

Foods to be proud of



Aibika



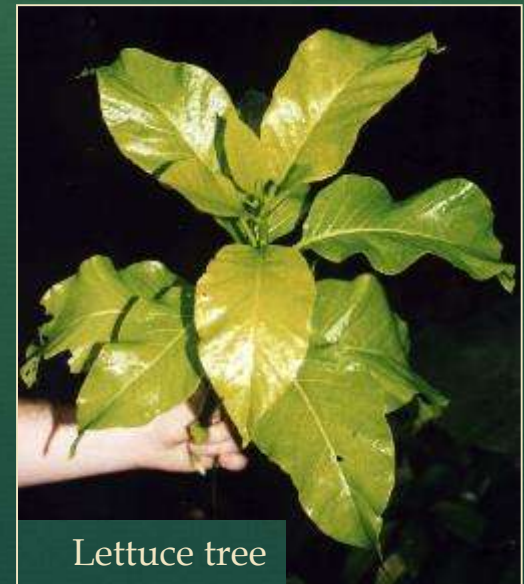
Amaranth



Sweet fern

Dark green tropical leaves are an important source of iron, protein and other Vitamins and minerals essential for healthy diets.

Everybody, especially women and children, should eat a fish tin full each day.



Lettuce tree

Foods to be enjoyed



Tu-lip

A taro leaf a day gives a child their Vitamin A

Eat dark green leaves every day



Taro

Kangkong – great for swamps



Sweet leaf

Sweet leaf good for hedges around houses!

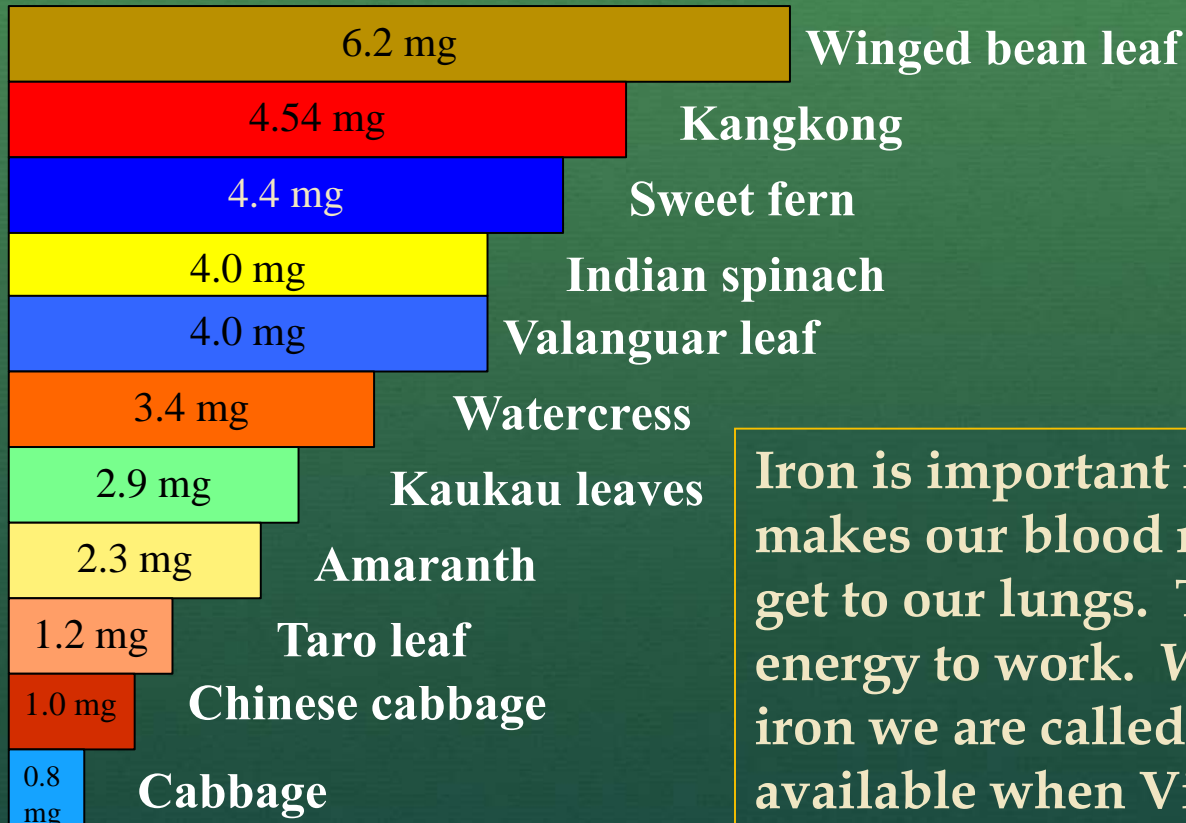


Kangkong

Iron for healthy blood

Leafy greens

Iron content



Winged bean leaves
and flowers

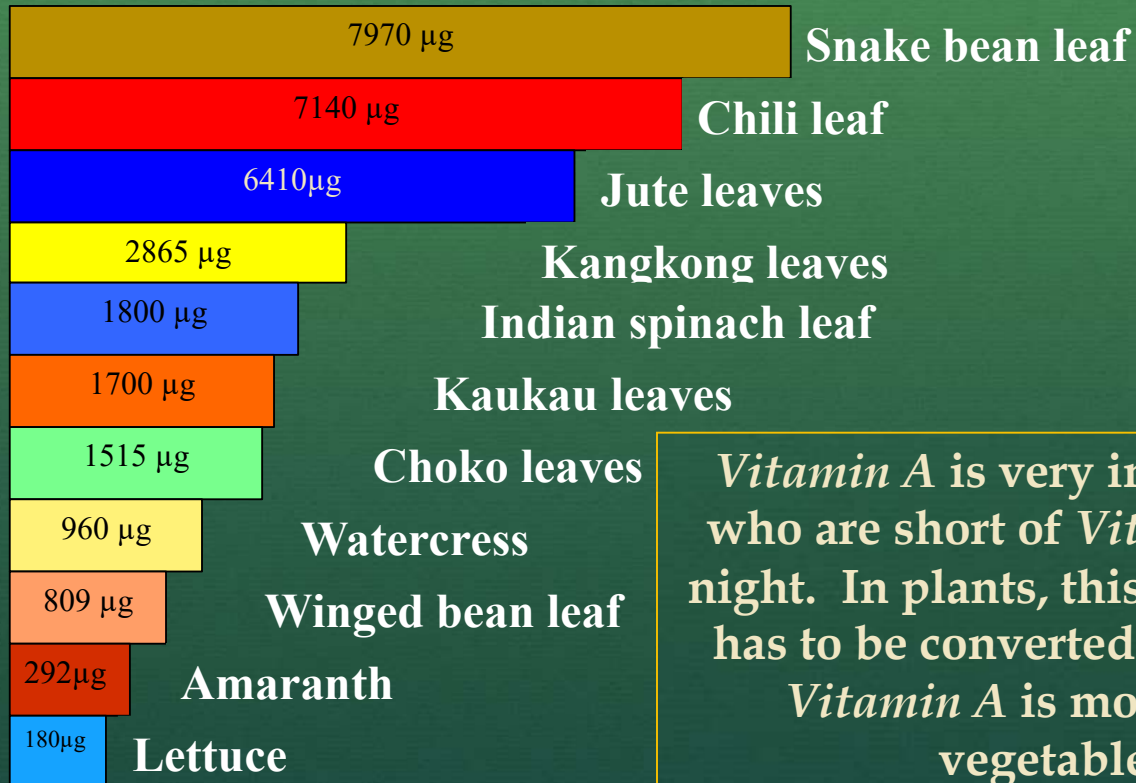


Iron is important in our blood. It is what makes our blood red. Iron helps oxygen get to our lungs. This helps us have energy to work. When we are short on iron we are called anaemic. Iron is more available when Vitamin C is also present.

Vitamin A for good eyesight

Leafy greens

Vitamin A content



Chili leaves



Vitamin A is very important for eyesight. People who are short of *Vitamin A* have trouble seeing at night. In plants, this chemical occurs in a form that has to be converted into *Vitamin A* in our bodies. *Vitamin A* is more easily made available if vegetables are cooked in oil.

Root crops are perfect plants for hot humid tropical climates

Starchy staple foods are the lifeblood of Papua New Guinea.
We need to look out for pests, disease, and signs that the plants are growing in poor soil.



Taro



Cassava



Tannia



Greater yam



Lesser yam

Pests, disease and deficiencies



Banana scab moth damage

The very small moth hides from the sun under the flower bracts

The taro blight fungus washes in the rain on hot wet nights



Taro blight

If plants are grown well, they get less damaged by insect pests, diseases and they do not go dry or pale showing that the soil is poor. Good farmers learn how to recognise these signs and act early.

The cassava growing in very poor coral soil cannot take up enough plant food



Cassava short of nutrients

This fungus scab gets bad when soils are poor, and also on varieties from overseas



Wrinkled kaukau leaves

This fungus makes leaves die off early when the leaves get damaged



Yam anthracnose

Nuts are nutritious and can be stored



Galip nuts



Finschia nuts



Aila nuts

You need to plant some trees now for your children to enjoy in future years.
They are better food than snack foods from stores.



Pao nuts

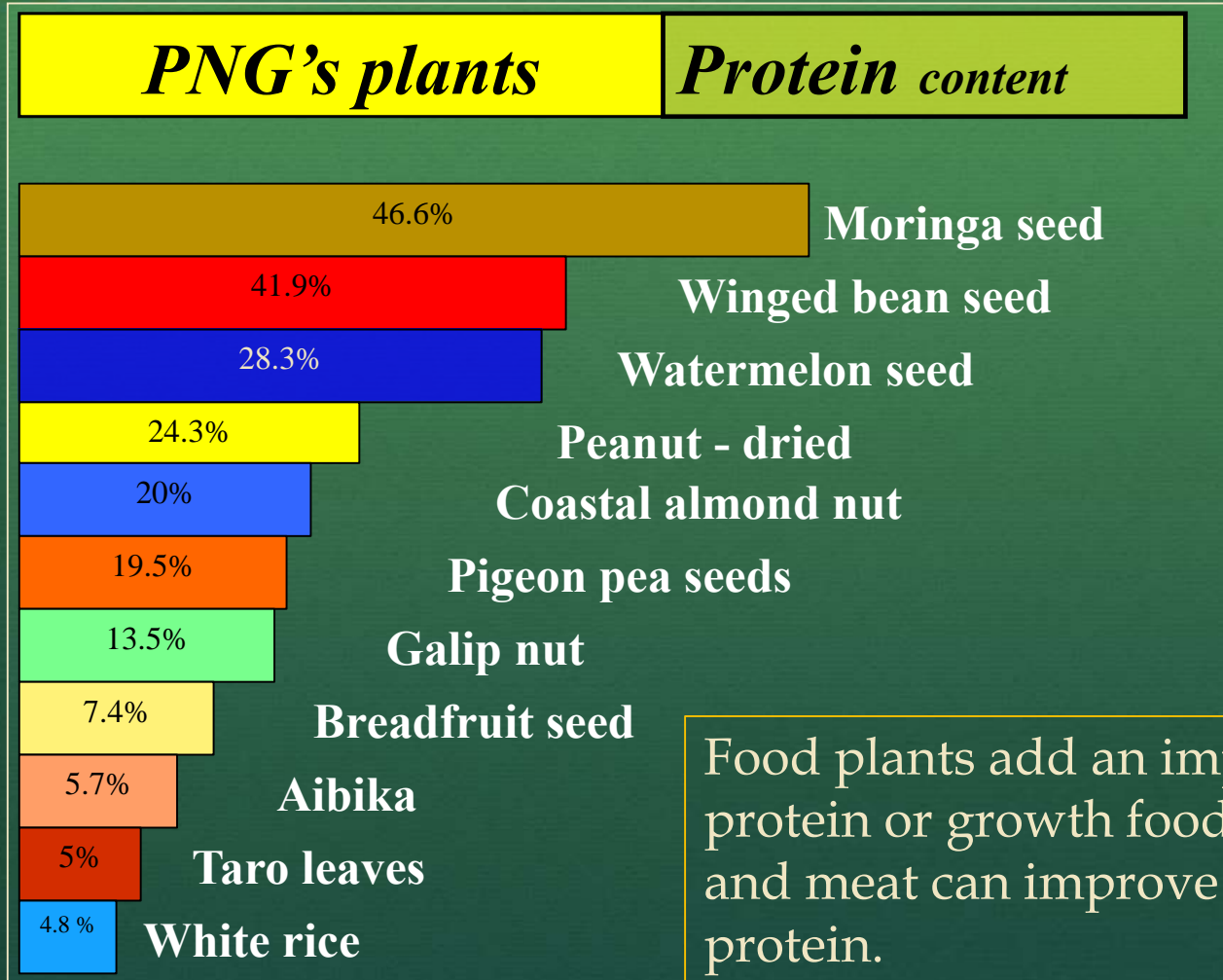


Breadfruit



Water chestnut

Protein foods



Coastal almond

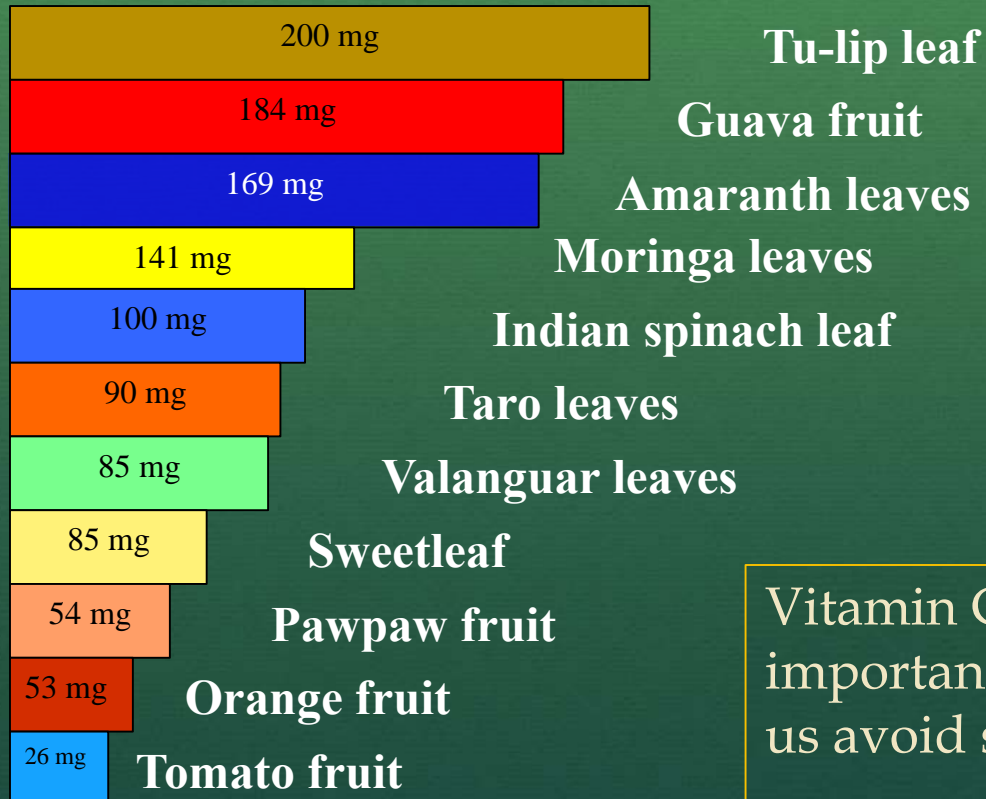


Food plants add an important amount of protein or growth food into our diets. Fish and meat can improve the quality of the protein.

Vitamin C for good health

Fruit & leafy greens

Vitamin C content



Tu-lip



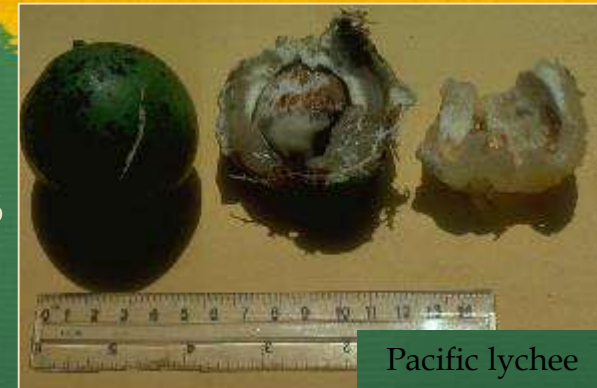
Vitamin C is important for helping us avoid sickness.

Fruit taste good and keep us well



New Guinea walnut

Fruit provide minerals
and Vitamins and
other important
nutrients that
everybody needs to
stay healthy and well



Pacific lychee



Pakal

Clever people plant
several kinds of
fruit trees



Golden apple



Malay apple



Bukubuk

Everybody should
eat some fruit
every day

Beans provide protein and restore soils



Winged bean

Beans have special bacteria attached to their roots that allow them to take nitrogen from the air and put it into the soil for plants to use. It is free fertiliser!



Peanut

Climbing beans can be allowed to climb up corn in gardens and still get good crops of beans and corn.



Snake bean



Pigeon pea



Lablab bean

Vegetables for variety and nutrition



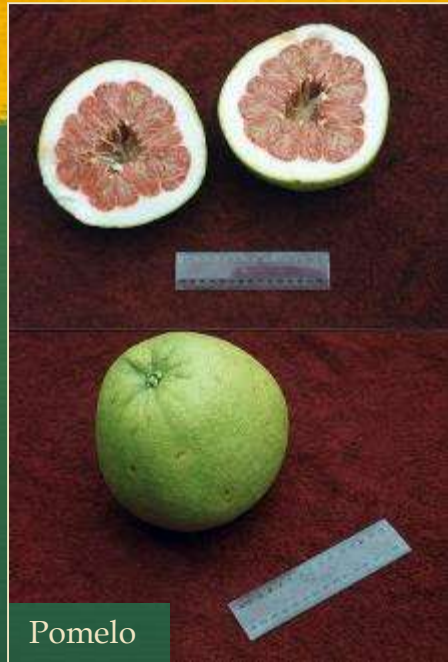
As some vegetables only grow in certain seasons, families should plant a wide range to provide food all year.



Some vegetables and edible leaves should be planted near houses so that they are easily available even on wet days or when people are too tired or busy to go to distant gardens.



Fruit for hot humid climates



Pomelo



Pineapple



Mango



Soursop



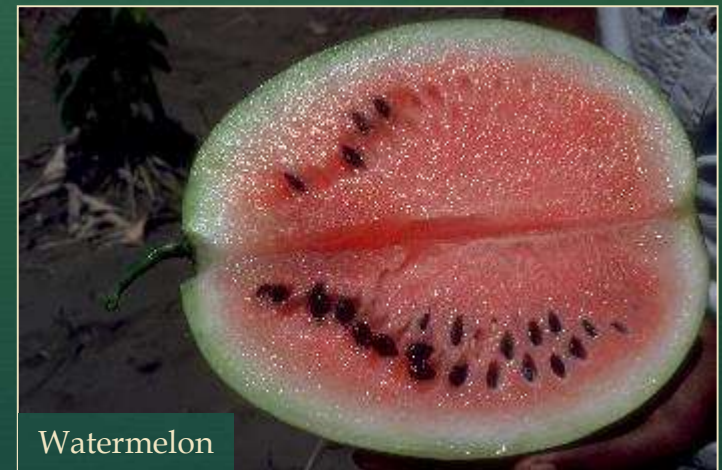
Pawpaw

**Fruit to be enjoyed
by all**

**Some need to be
planted for the future**

**Many fruit are
seasonal**

Some grow quickly



Watermelon

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***Documenting the edible plants of the world and getting
the information back to those who need it most***



For additional information about these plants or
for publications as pdf books see the
Food Plants International website
www:foodplantsinternational.com



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