

Elaeis guineensis

Botanical Name: *Elaeis guineensis*

Common Name: Oil palm

Morphological Characters

Mature palms are single-stemmed and grow to 20 m tall. The leaves are pinnate and reach between 3-5 m long. A young palm produces about 30 leaves a year. Established palms over 10 years produce about 20 leaves a year. The flowers are produced in dense clusters; each individual flower is small, with three sepals and three petals. The palm fruit takes five to six months to mature from pollination to maturity. It is reddish, about the size of a large plum, and grows in large bunches. Each fruit is made up of an oily, fleshy outer layer (the pericarp), with a single seed (the palm kernel), also rich in oil. When ripe, each bunch of fruit weighs between 5–30 kg (11–66 lb) depending on the age of the palm tree.



Growing season and Type

- 1) It is the most productive species for bio-diesel. It contains vitamins A and E. Palm kernel oil is very similar to coconut oil and is used in edible fats, in the preparation of ice cream and mayonnaise, and in the manufacture of soaps and detergents. By tapping the male inflorescence, a wine can be made and the central shoot or cabbage of the palm is edible.
- 2) Begins to bear in 3-4 years, is in full production in 8-10 years and is usually cut down at 25-35 years, when the palm gets too tall and unpractical to harvest. The inflorescence develops in the apical bud for two years. After pollination fruit takes 150-180 days to mature. The tree requires a growing period of at least 270 days per year, the optimum is more than 300 days and the tree can grow throughout the year.



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2



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1) Seed of *Elaeis guineensis*

2) Leaf of *Elaeis guineensis*

3) Tree of *Elaeis guineensis*

Source: www.britannica.com/plant/