

## MANIHOT ESCULENTA THE CASSAVA PLANT



Kingdom: Plantae  
Phylum: Tracheophyta  
Class: Magnoliopsida  
Order: Malpighiales  
Family: Euphorbiaceae  
Genus: Manihot  
Species : Manihot esculenta

Common Names in India:  
Kappa (കപ്പ) - Malayalam  
Maravallikkilanku  
(மரவள்ளிக்கிழங்கு) -  
Tamil  
Shakarkand (शकरकंद) -  
Hindi

### GENERAL FEATURES:

Manihot esculenta is a perennial shrub or small tree, although typically cultivated as an annual crop.

It can grow up to 4 meters (13 feet) tall.

The most important part is the large, starchy tuberous root, which is the edible portion of the plant. These roots can grow 8-30 cm (3-12 inches) long and 1-3 cm (0.4-1.2 inches) in diameter.

Leaves are deeply lobed, lanceolate, and hairy.

## USES

**Food:** The cassava root is a staple food source in many parts of India, particularly in the southern states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It is boiled, roasted, or fried and consumed with various dishes.

**Starch Extraction:** Cassava is also a source of tapioca starch, extracted from the roots. Tapioca flour made from this starch is used in various Indian dishes like sabudana khichdi and sabudana wada, especially during fasting periods.

**Animal Feed:** The leaves and other parts of the cassava plant can be used as animal fodder.