

Apeiba aspera Aubl.

V.M. NIETO and J. RODRIGUEZ
Corporacion Nacional de Investigacion of Forestal
Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia

TILIACEAE (LINDEN FAMILY)

No synonyms

Corcho, guásimo blanco, peinemico, peinemono

Apeiba aspera is a fast-growing tree that can reach 20 m in height and 30 cm d.b.h. It has an angular, gray, slightly greenish shaft. The bark is thin or of medium thickness and detaches irregularly during the year. The leaves are simple and alternate with stipules; the back side is a much lighter green than the right side; both surfaces are glabrescent when young. The tree requires deep soils with moderate drainage. Although it tolerates wet places, it prefers clayey or loose clayey soils and can endure acid soils with low fertility and a flat or hilly topography. It grows at elevations between sea level and 500 m, with annual precipitation ranging between 2000 and 8000 mm. *Apeiba aspera* tolerates a range of 24 °C minimum temperature and 30 °C maximum temperature, with an annual average of 28 °C (Rodriguez 1988). It is found in the following vegetal formations: very wet Tropical forest (bmh-T), wet Tropical forest (bh-T), and pluvial Tropical forest (bp-T) (Venegas 1978). It cannot endure attacks by parasites (Lorantaceae). It is susceptible to prolonged droughts and to soils with excess drainage.

The wood is light and soft, and hardens after drying in the air. It is pale cream to grayish in color, with occasional pink hues. Its low density makes it appropriate for divisions, acoustic veneering, and wings on lath boards for doors. It is used primarily for decorative finishing of home and building interiors. Additionally, it has been used in the manufacture of doors, windows, socles, and ceilings, and in light construction.

The medium size flowers are yellow and borne on inflorescences opposite the leaves. The fruits are in flattened cap-

sules, black when ripe, with stiff, slightly sharp thorns. The seeds are black, small, and abundant. Viable seeds average 37,018 per kg. Seeds can be stored for 1 year in hermetic containers at a humidity content less than 10 percent and 4 °C.

The appropriate pregermination treatment involves sandpapering the seeds until they lose their natural shine and appear completely porous. A secondary pregermination treatment consists of immersing the seeds in sulfuric acid at 95 percent concentration for 40 to 70 minutes (Montero and Estevez 1983, Trujillo 1996). Germination occurs in laboratories at 7 to 28 days.

About 20,000 plantules are obtained from 1 kg of seeds in a nursery. *Apeiba aspera* produces abundant seeds and is easily handled in nurseries. The substrate must be made up of two parts sand and one part soil, which must be disinfected before seeds are planted. Seeds must be sowed deep enough to prevent uncovering when watered, but they must not be too embedded. The species can reproduce asexually (through stem cuttings), but the technical standards for implementation have not been researched.

All underbrush should be removed from the planting site. The species does tolerate shade but grows more in full sun. At planting, each tree should be fertilized with 40 g of NPK in a triple 15 formulation. This treatment will result in a higher survival rate and better initial growth. The planting distance must be appropriate to allow the diametrical development of trees and to decrease embranchment. Distances of 3 by 3 m or 4 by 4 m are recommended.

