

FGCU Food Forest

Plant Database

Atemoya (*Annona cherimola x squamosa*)

Quick Facts

Origin: Miami, Florida, USA.

Description: Man-made hybrid between Cherimoya and Sugar Apple; small tree with a maximum height of about 25-30 ft. with green, heart-shaped fruits between 3-6" long.

Harvest: Summer to fall.

Flower: Spring to summer.

Tolerance: Cold hardy to 28-30°F; thrives in a variety of soils, but prefers deep, rich loam with good drainage.



General Description: Atemoya is a cross between the Cherimoya, native to the Andes mountains, and the Sugar Apple, native to the Caribbean. Atemoya was first hybridized by horticulturalist P.J. Wester at the Miami USDA lab in 1908, and introduced to growers in south Florida, the Philippines, Hawaii, South Africa, and Israel between 1910-1960. Atemoya trees may reach 25-30 ft. tall and produce heart-shaped fruit, usually harvested in late summer and fall. Fruit is sweet and subacid, and resembles the cherimoya in flavor.

- **Native Origin:** Miami, Florida, USA.
- **General History:** P.J. Wester crossed The Atemoya, a Cherimoya and Sugar Apple hybrid, at the USDA lab in Miami, Florida, USA in 1908. Seeds of the Atemoya were then distributed to growers in the Philippines in 1910, and Southeast Asia, Hawaii, Israel, South Africa and Florida (USA) between 1920 and 1960. Multiple varieties arose independently in many different countries, and some of the more popular varieties are widely available for purchase from nurseries in south Florida. Atemoya, like many Annona species, can be found in home gardens in south Florida, but is typically less common compared to the more popular fruit trees like mango, avocado, starfruit, etc.

- **Distribution:** Tropics and subtropics; Florida (USA), the Philippines and other southeast Asian countries, Israel, Hawaii, the Caribbean, etc. Although Atemoya is not commonly cultivated in south Florida, it can still be found in limited production in south Florida in Homestead, south of Miami, and on Pine Island in southwest Florida. Atemoya can also be found in home gardens in south Florida, but is less common compared to other fruit trees.
- **Season of Harvest:** Early summer to early fall.
- **Culinary Uses:** The heart-shaped fruit can be quartered or cut in half and eaten raw, although many people prefer to chill the fruit before eating. The flavor is a cross between custard, vanilla, wintergreen, and pineapple. Atemoya can be used in many different dessert recipes with homemade ice creams being the most popular. The seeds are toxic and should not be ingested.

Amaranth	
Scientific Classification	
Kingdom:	Plantae
(unranked):	Angiosperms
(unranked):	Magnoliids
Order:	Magnoliales
Family:	Annonaceae
Genus:	Annona
Species:	<i>A. x atemoya</i>

Sources

Boning, Charles R. (2006). *Florida's Best Fruiting Plants: Native and Exotic Trees, Shrubs, and Vines*. Sarasota, Florida: Pineapple Press, Inc. pp. 26-27.

<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/morton/atemoya.html>

http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/giam/plants_and_grasses/fruits_vegetables/atemoya.html

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg332>

<http://www.fruitsinfo.com/Atemoya-Exotic-fruits.php>