

# Fact Sheet: *Kigelia*

*Kigelia africana*

## Common Names

<b>English:</b>	Sausage Tree
<b>Silozi:</b>	Mupolota
<b>Kavango:</b>	Vunguvungu
<b>German:</b>	Wurstbaum
<b>Afrikaans:</b>	Worsboom

## Introduction



▲ (Arnold, 2017)

A semi-deciduous tree that can grow up to 18 m high with its crown spreading up to 20 m wide. The leaves are large and shiny dark green. Dark red showy flowers occur in a hanging spray. The greyish-brown sausage-shaped fruit hang from long stalks and are at times 80 cm long and can weigh up to 9 kg. Fruit are found on the trees between December and June (Curtis & Mannheimer, 2005).

## Traditional knowledge

The roots of *K. africana* can be used to yield a bright yellow dye. Although fresh fruit cannot be eaten as they cause blisters, traditional remedies prepared from crushed, fresh or dried fruit are used to treat ulcers, sores and syphilis and some kinds of skin cancer (Van Wyk & Gericke, 2007). Tea from the fruit pulp can be used to treat rheumatism and dysentery. Seeds can be roasted and eaten and are used to flavour beer and aid in its fermentation (Curtis & Mannheimer, 2005). The juice of *Kigelia* fruit is traditionally used for skin tightening and is still used for this purpose in today's cosmetics industry.

## Status IUCN: least concern



## Distribution

*K. africana* occurs on floodplains and along riverbanks, always in woodlands and only occasionally on sandy plains. It has been found to also grow well in drier areas.

◀ (Irish, 2018)

## Composition and use

The fruit extract shows antibacterial and anti-inflammatory activity, which can be attributed to quinones and coumarins (Van Wyk & Gericke, 2007). Iridioids, naphthaquinones and phenylpropanoids reduce inflammation and act calming on the skin after sun exposure. Skin collagen and elastin production is supported by saponosides and flavonoids. Luteolin, caffeic and ferulic acids have anti-ageing effects on skin (PhytoTrade Africa, n.d.). Other components found in fruit are, amongst other, kigelin, desmethylkigelin, kigelinin and kigelinol (Arnold, 2017).



## REFERENCES

- Arnold, W., 2017. *Heilpflanzenlexikon* CH. [Online] Available at: [https://www.awl.ch/heilpflanzen/kigelia\\_africana/leberwurstbaum.htm](https://www.awl.ch/heilpflanzen/kigelia_africana/leberwurstbaum.htm) [Accessed 2 Nov 2019].
- Curtis, B. & Mannheimer, C., 2005. *Tree Atlas of Namibia*. Windhoek: National Botanical Research Institute.
- Irish, J., 2018. *Namibia Biodiversity Database*. [Online] [Accessed Nov 2019].
- PhytoTrade Africa, n.d. *Anti-inflammatory and other effects of Kigelia africana extracts*. s.l., s.n.
- Van Wyk, B. & Gericke, N., 2007. *People's Plants A Guide to useful plants of southern Africa*. s.l.:s.n.



**Contact Detail:**

**Mrs Dagmar Honsbein**

**T:** +264 (0)81-149-1086

**E:** info@nanci.biz

www.nanci.biz

**FB:** @NamibiaCosmetics

**IG:** @Namibia\_Cosmetics

*NANCI is the network for the health  
and beauty industry in Namibia.*

**MITSMED Contact:**

frans.nekuma@mitsmed.gov.na • +264 (0)61 2837390.

**ProBATS Contact:**

info-probats@giz.de