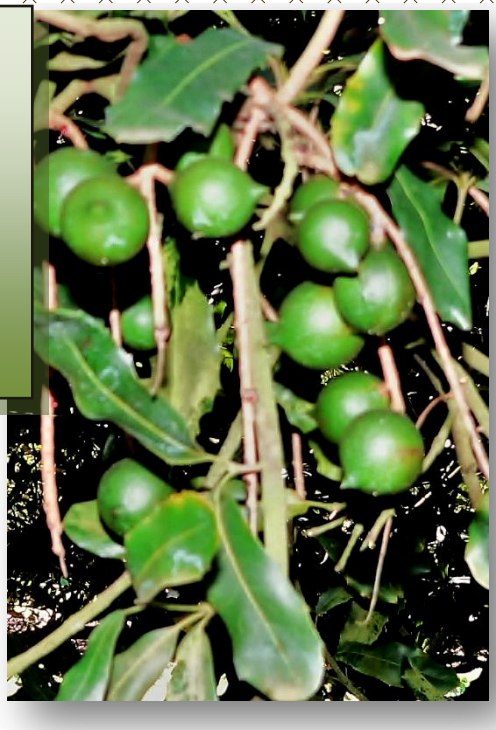
Macadamia nuts come from Australia - *not from* Hawaii



In Australia, we all know that *Macadamia* nuts come from native Australian rainforest trees. However, elsewhere in the world, many believe they come from Hawaii, where they were first introduced in 1922 for windbreaks and later farmed commercially from 1925. It was not until 1997 that *Macadamia* nut production in Australia finally topped that of Hawaii. This is surprising when you hear that the first commercial *Macadamia* orchard in Australia was planted much earlier, in 1882, by Charles Staff, at Rous Mill near of Lismore[1] in north-eastern NSW. The secret to successful production seems to have been the innovation of grafting high yielding, good quality stocks onto seedlings in 1937.



M. integrifolia



M. jansenii



M. ternifolia



M. tetraphylla



We should feel a close bond with *Macadamia* as the genus belongs in the plant family **Proteaceae** and is closely related to *Banksia*, *Grevillea*, *Hakea* and South African genera including *Protea* and *Leucospermum.* It seems there are now four species of *Macadamia*: *M. tetraphylla* & *M. integrifolia*, from the rainforests of north-

eastern NSW and south-eastern Queensland; *M. ternifolia* from SE Queensland; and the recently discovered *M. jansenii* from near Gin Gin, west of Bundaberg in Queensland. Of these, only the raw nuts of two species, *M. integrifolia* and *M. tetraphylla* can be eaten raw. These two species freely hybridise and there are now many cultivated varieties[1].



These tasty nuts are nutritious too, containing extremely high levels of monounsaturated fats (58%) and protein (8%) as well as carbohydrates, dietary fibre calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and iron. However, take care, as some people, (children and adults), can be highly allergic to tree nuts, including *Macadamia*[2].

Sustainability



In Australia it is estimated that more than 4.5 million *Macadamia* nut trees have been planted for commercial production. Disposal of waste shells has become a huge problem. In 2003, *Suncoast Gold Macadamias* at Gympie in SE Queensland, together with *Ergon Energy*, developed a miniature power plant with a 35 tonne boiler and a 1.5 megawatt turbine that burns 5000 tonnes of shells annually to generate not only sufficient power for *Suncoast Gold's* own operations but also enough power for 1200 Queensland homes, reducing greenhouse gases by 9,500 tonnes each year, the equivalent of 2000 cars off the road[3,4].

[1] Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macadamia
[2] United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, Basic Report: 12131, Nuts, Macadamia nuts, raw.
[3] Landline: '*Macadamia* nut power' - http://www.abc.net.au/landline/stories/s962653.htm
[4] Suncoast Gold Macadamias: http://www.suncoastgold.com.au/aboutus.php
Distribution maps modified from: Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities: http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicspecies.pl?taxon_id=7214#distribution

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