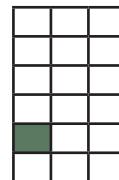


# *Boswellia papyrifera*

Burseraceae



## Indigenous

**Ag:** *Fatuka*

**Am:** *Kererrrie, Ye-tigre etan zaf*

**Eng:** *Bitter frankincense*

**Hd:** *Libanat*

**Or:** *Galgalem, Kafal*

**Tg:** *Dankwa, Meger, Walba*

## Ecology

Found in Acacia-Commiphora woodland and wooded grassland in North Africa, Arabia and Somalia. In Ethiopia, the tree is found in Dry Kolla agroclimatic zone of Tigray, Gonder, Gojam and Shoa regions, often on steep rocky slopes, lava flows or in sandy river valleys, 950–1,800 m.

## Uses

Live fence, incense (resin).

## Description

A deciduous tree to 4–12 m or more, with thick branches tipped with clusters of leaves, the crown rounded. BARK: Smooth, pale yellow-brown, peeling off in large papery pieces. A cut looks red-brown and a fragrant milky resin drips out. LEAVES: Large and compound on a stalk to 45 cm, 6–8 pairs of leaflets plus one at the tip, each oval, 4–8 cm, densely hairy below, the edge sharp or round-toothed, sometimes double-toothed. FLOWERS: Sweet smelling, develop on loose heads at the ends of thick branchlets, appearing before the new leaves. The red flower stalk, to 35 cm, bears the white-pink flowers with 5 petals and 10 yellow stamens. FRUIT: Red capsules about 2 cm long, 3-sided with 3 hard seeds inside.

## Propagation

Seedlings, cuttings.

## Seed:

**Treatment:** No need

**Storage:** Stores well.

## Management

The tree needs to rest from 2-5 years before the second harvest of resin-gum. over-exploitation could damage the trees.

## Remarks

Harvesting of resin can take place most of the year. The bark is scraped for resin-gum droplets. This first cutting is thrown away and a second cutting taken weeks later is only of low quality. A third cutting produces quality frankincense. *B. papyrifera* has a very similar resin and is used as frankincense in Ethiopia. *B. ogadensis*, special to Harerge, has simple leaflets and produces a good resin also.

