

Psidium guajava

Guava

Psidium guajava L.

Family: Myrtaceae

Description: Small branched tree, bark smooth, mottled, peeling. Young stems angled. Leaves opposite, 6 inches long by 3 inches wide, aromatic, lateral veins on underside prominent. Flowers white, 1 or more in leaf axils, many stamens. Fruits yellow, 4 inches diameter, with pink flesh. Seeds tan colored, hard, many. Fruit used commercially to make jams and drinks. In Latin America, the rind is canned as a dessert fruit. A good source of vitamin C. Hawaiians recognized three varieties plus a shrubby, small-fruited, small-leaved variety^(59,70). *Guajava*, from a native name⁽⁷⁰⁾.

Distribution: Of tropical American origin, guava is now widely distributed throughout tropics. It is a weed of pastures and forests, especially in wetter mesic zones. It was introduced into Hawai'i by Francisco de Paul Marin in the early 19th century and was naturalized before the end of that century⁽⁷⁰⁾. Occurs on all inhabited islands.

Environmental impact: Edible fruit and hard seed allow guava to spread throughout pastures and natural areas by animals to form dense stands and shade out the understory. Probably the most noxious weed of pastures because of its large area of infestation. Fruit is a host of fruit flies.

Management: Birds, livestock, and feral animals spread the seed. Cattle tend to ignore the leaves except when they are under intensive grazing management and grazing very succulent forage; then they develop a craving for roughage. Goats and sheep graze the leaves and strip the bark. Goats have been used to control guava at Kapapala Ranch on Hawai'i (An Peischel). Guava is sensitive to foliar applications of triclopyr, dicamba, and 2,4-D at 1 lb/acre and to cut-surface applications of concentrates of these herbicides; very sensitive to basal bark treatments of triclopyr ester and 2,4-D ester at 2% and 4% of product, respectively, in diesel or crop oil; very



sensitive to soil-applied tebuthiuron at 2 lb/acre⁽⁴⁸⁾. Very sensitive to very-low-volume basal bark application of 20% triclopyr ester product in oil. A small-leaved, shrubby form of guava appears to be tolerant of foliar-applied herbicides but sensitive to tebuthiuron.