



Green, pulpy, sweet, and healthy. That is guyabano for you.

Guyabano (*Anona muricata*), or soursop as it is known in English, is a small tropical fruit tree bearing a sweet heart-shaped fruit with a soft-spined green outer skin and soft pulpy white flesh. It has been refreshing people for a long time as a fruit juice, flavoring, puree, tea, or eaten as it is. It is being widely cultivated in Central America, some sub-Saharan parts of Africa, and in Southeast Asia, the Philippines included.

But aside from being rich in carbohydrates, dietary fiber, and Vitamins C, B1, and B2, do you know why it is very good for you? Studies by the Chemicals and Energy Division (CED) of the Department of Science and Technology's Industrial Technology Development Institute (DOST-ITDI) show that guyabano generally has high flavonoid content. Flavonoids are phytochemicals that have been found to inhibit or even prevent the growth of viruses, carcinogens, and allergens.

These are just the few benefits that the DOST-ITDI aims to harness as it develops and promotes guyabano as a natural dietary health supplement. Traditionally, *guyabano* has been consumed by diabetics to lower their blood sugar, and tests showed that it even outperforms Metformin, the most commonly used maintenance drug of diabetics, in lowering blood glucose levels.

Hence there is the need for a better and more convenient packaging for *guyabano* to strengthen its marketability.

ITDI's CED, while adhering to WHO standards, processed and packaged *guyabano* fruits and leaves into 250 and 300mg capsules or in two-gram teabags. "Thus, *guyabano* capsules and tea bags are now more convenient to use. They are standardized and naturally processed, and thus guaranteed safe," says Annabelle Briones, CED chief science research specialist.

In addition, *guyabano* has been scientifically and traditionally proven to have great natural benefits. It helps lower fever, spasms, heart rate, and blood pressure. It also helps relieve pain, inflammation, and asthma. Consuming guyabano extract can also safely prevent cancer cells from forming while effectively slowing down tumor growth. It also helps stop the growth of

Stay healthy with DOST-developed guyabano supplements & tea

Written by Reginald Roy U. de la Cruz, S&T Media Service, DOST- ITDI
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harmful bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites, even as it stimulates digestion and stop convulsions.

At the ITDI, CED researchers performed thin-layer chromatographic fingerprinting and phyto-chemical screening on the *guyabano* extract to determine its chemical makeup. They also tested the fruit for anti-microbial capability against *Staphylococcus aureus*, *E. coli*, and other common bacteria strains, as well as for acute toxicity.

They used the Folin-Ciocalteu method to determine the antioxidant content of the leaves and fruits. After the screening, the researchers confirmed that the *guyabano* extract used was relatively free of pesticide residues, heavy metals, molds, and salmonella.

“We also discovered that the green unripe *guyabano* fruit contains more flavonoids than the yellowish ripe fruit. The leaves meanwhile are rich in tannins, fats and oils, unsaturated steroids, and triterpenes, and again, more flavonoids,” Briones said. “Therefore, all these properties really make guyabano an ideal health supplement.”

So it seems like it is not just an apple a day that could keep the doctor away, but *guyabano* too!