

technology transfer *fact sheet*



Center for Wood Anatomy Research

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Croton megalocarpus

Family: Euphorbiaceae

Musine

Other Common Names: Mlalai, Muhande (Tanzania).

Distribution: Occurs in tropical East Africa, with an altitudinal range of 4,000 to 6,700 ft; used as a shade tree in coffee plantations.

The Tree: May reach a height of 120 ft; with a clear cylindrical bole 40 to 60 ft in length, free of buttresses; with trunk diameters of 2 to 4 ft.

The Wood:

General Characteristics: Heartwood yellowish to brownish gray, sometimes with dark brown to black streaks near the center of the log; sapwood not clearly differentiated. Texture medium; grain straight; unpleasant smell when freshly cut; dry sawdust irritating to nose and throat.

Weight: Basic specific gravity (ovendry weight/green volume) 0.57; air-dry density 44 pcf.

Mechanical Properties: (2-in. standard)

Moisture content (%)	Bending strength (Psi)	Modulus of elasticity (1,000 psi)	Maximum crushing strength (Psi)
Green(5)	11,500	NA	6,600
12%	14,000	NA	7,500

Janka side hardness 1,300 lb for green material and 1,350 lb for dry.

Drying and Shrinkage: Rather difficult to season without warping and checking. Kiln schedule T3-C2 is suggested for 4/4 stock and T3-C1 for 8/4. No data available on shrinkage values. Movement in service is large.

Working Properties: Reported to be easy to saw, moderately difficult to machine but planes to a smooth lustrous surface, good gluing and finishing characteristics. Dust may be irritating to mucous membranes.

Durability: Vulnerable to attack by decay and stain fungi and liable to termite attack.

Preservation: Reported to be readily treatable by pressure systems.

Uses: General construction, heavy-duty flooring.

Additional Reading: (3), (5), (9)

3. Bolza, E., and W.G. Keating. 1972. African timbers-the properties, used, and characteristics of 700 species. CSIRO. Div. of Build. Res., Melbourne, Australia.
5. Bryce, J.M. 1967. The commercial timbers of Tanzania. Tanzanian For. Div. Util. Sec. Moshi.
9. Farmer, R.H. 1972. Handbook of hardwoods. H.M. Stationery Office. London.

From: Chudnoff, Martin. 1984. Tropical Timbers of the World. USDA Forest Service. Ag. Handbook No. 607.