



Nectandra spp.

Family: Lauraceae

Canelo

Laurel

Other Common Names: Aguacatillo (Mexico, Honduras, Costa Rica), Laurel (Colombia, Venezuela), Silverballi (Guyana), Pisi (Surinam), Canela (Brazil), Ayui-y, Laurel (Argentina). A large number of species make up this group.

Distribution: Widely distributed throughout tropical America.

The Tree: Varies with species, may reach a height of 100 ft; commonly up to 28 in. in diameter, occasionally to 40 in. Boles are straight and cylindrical, sometimes buttressed.

The Wood:

General Characteristics: Heartwood brownish yellow with a green cast, or olive to light olive brown and in some species becoming blackish brown; transition to whitish or brownish sapwood often gradual. Texture mostly medium to rather coarse; luster usually satiny or silky; grain straight to roey; odor spicy, taste mild to pronounced.

Weight: Basic specific gravity (ovendry weight/green volume) varying with species, mostly 0.43 to 0.61; air-dry density 32 to 46 pcf.

Mechanical Properties: (First set of data based on the 2-in. standard; second and third sets based on the 2-cm standard.)

Moisture content (%)	Bending strength (Psi)	Modulus of elasticity (1,000 psi)	Maximum crushing strength (Psi)
Green (74)	10,440	1,540	5,020
12%	14,230	1,650	7,260
Green (30)	12,800	1,900	5,330
15%	17,100	NA	8,500
Green (30)	10,900	1,370	4,870
15%	12,400	NA	6,620

Janka side hardness 930 lb for green material and 1,060 lb at 12% moisture content. Forest Products Laboratory toughness average for green and dry material is 123 in.-lb. (5/8-in. specimen).

Drying and Shrinkage: The wood air-dries at a fast to moderate rate with little or degrade due to warping or checking. No information available on dry kiln schedules Shrinkage green to ovendry: radial 3.4%; tangential 6.0%; volumetric 9.8%.

Working Properties: The wood has excellent working properties with either machine or hand tools, dresses to a smooth finish. Glues and paints well.

Durability: May vary with species, generally rated durable in resistance to attack by decay fungi but rather susceptible to attack by dry-wood termites.

Preservation: Heartwood is extremely resistant to moisture absorption, comparable to teak and is thus difficult to impregnate.

Uses: Furniture and cabinet work, ship decking and boat planking, flooring, millwork veneers and plywood, and general carpentry.

Additional Reading: (30), (71), (72), (74)

30. Instituto de Pesquisas Tecnológicas. 1956. Tabelas de resultados obtidos para madeiras nacionais. Bol. Inst. Pesqu. tec. Sao Paulo No. 31.

71. Villamil G., F. (Editor). 1971. Maderas colombianas. Proexpo, Bogota.

72. Vink, A. T. 1965. Surinam timbers: A summary of available information with brief descriptions of the main species of Surinam. Surinam Forest Service, Paramaribo.

74. Wangaard, F. F., and A. F. Muschler. 1952. Properties and uses of tropical woods, III. Tropical Woods 98:1-190.

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