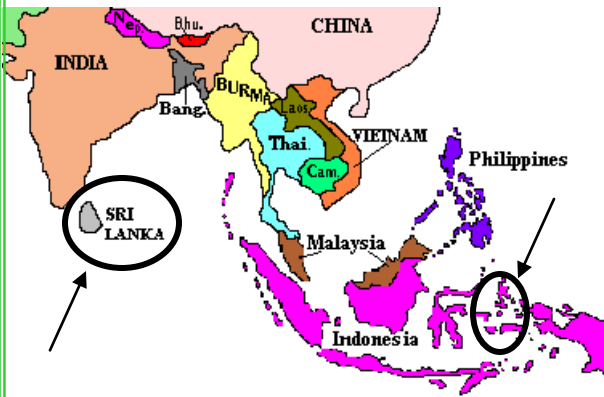


Star Fruit

The *carambola*, or star fruit as it has been named because of its distinctive shape, is believed to have originated in either Sri Lanka or the Molluccas (islands of Indonesia). It spread throughout Asia and has been cultivated there for centuries. It is commonly grown in southern China, India and the Philippines.



The star fruit is relatively new to North and South America. In the United States, commercial cultivation and consumer acceptance of the fruit only dates to the 1970s. That acceptance is attributed to Morris Arkin, a backyard horticulturalist from Coral Gables, Florida. During the late 1960s, Arkin began working with the *carambola* varieties of that time which were attractive in the landscape, but the fruits were sour and generally considered inedible. He cultivated plants and trees in his backyard, eventually developing a kind of star fruit that was named after him which was sweeter and more suited to commercial production. Today, the 'Arkin' variety of the star fruit represents 98% of the current production in Florida!



The entire star fruit is edible, including the slightly waxy skin! The flesh is crunchy, firm, and juicy. It does not contain fibers and has a texture similar to that of a grape. The taste is a little difficult to compare to other tastes, but it has been likened to a mix of apple, pear, and citrus family fruits all at once. The star fruit is very low in calories, but is high in vitamin C, calcium and fiber.

Star fruits growing on the tree

