

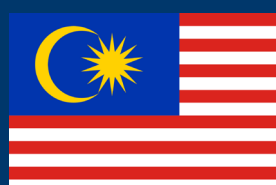
# Local foods and markets support conservation of *Garcinia fusca* L. in Sisaket Province, Thailand



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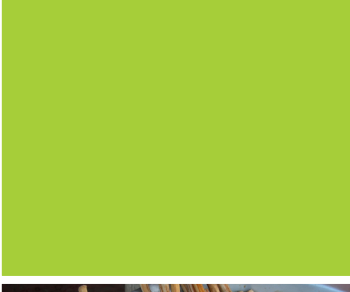
For 50 years, people have travelled for hours in order to taste the chicken grilled on sticks of *Garcinia fusca* in Sisaket Province, Thailand. While *G. fusca*, also known as *madan*, is used as spices in India and as flavouring in soup in Malaysia, the Thai have discovered a unique way of using the madan stem. When the chicken is impaled with a madan stick and grilled over a fire, gum secretes from the stick and mixes with the meat – giving it a distinctive flavour and aroma found nowhere else and making it a favourite among the locals. The gum is said to be cancer preventive and the young leaves of *G. fusca* are used as a food additive in many Thai dishes. The Huay Tap Tan district only has a population of 40,000 people, but has 53 chicken stands along the main road. The grilled chicken provides a huge income to the community. The Huay Tap Tan community earns about 350,000 Baht/day (31,600 USD/day). About 2,000 chickens are consumed every day and about 1,000 tons of madan sticks are used every year. One labourer can earn 600 Baht/day (20 USD/day) by cutting madan sticks and a cook can earn 35 Baht (1.17 USD) per chicken piece sold.

Originally, the *G. fusca* bushes growing near the river were enough to meet the demand. However, due to the soaring popularity of the grilled chicken and the destruction of the madan’s natural habitat of the Tap Tan’s watershed, the plant species is now extremely vulnerable to overexploitation and local extinction. In order to protect their local grilled chicken industry and conserve the madan plants, the community has taken matters into their own hands and has made an effort to manage madan for the long term and for sustainable use. This good practice developed gradually as a concerted effort that involves many stakeholders in the village. The community has developed its own propagation techniques where seeds and seedlings are collected from the river forest, grown in nurseries and then replanted in the forest. By zoning the area and assigning each harvest zone to a group, the community facilitates management and ensures that individuals have an invested responsibility.





## Steps of preparing grilled chicken in Sisaket



Due to this good practice, the threat to the madan plant diversity has been greatly diminished, community ties have been strengthened and public awareness has increased. Many people's livelihoods have been preserved by protecting the local grilled chicken industry. There is also the possibility of enhancing diversity by introducing a new related species, *Garcinia schomberciana*, with great aroma according to locals. To save unique *Garcinia fusca* and *Garcinia schomberciana* biodiversity, on-the-ground local agencies need to work through school children, community and market institutions and set the conservation agenda.



Chicken stalls in Sisaket Thailand.  
Photo: Tawatchai

Credit: Ms Sara Hom, Hugo Lamers, Margaret Yoovatana, Tawatchai Nimkingrat, Songpol Somsri and Bhuwon Sthapit, Bioversity International and Department of Agriculture, Thailand



### Further information

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