

Queen's Favorite Breakfast Fruit 'Ugli'

By : **Juggernaut**

“ I heard good things about you, I hope you can help,” the voice came from an old person sitting in dark green “ Humber”, an old British auto make. It was in the parking lot of sugarcane research station in Jamaica. Juggernaut looked inside the car carefully to see who was speaking while his chauffeur was standing with a cordial smile. The old man inside the car invited Juggernaut into his car to sit next to him. The person was in his eighties, a person of English descent with distinct island accent.



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"I heard good things about you," the man repeated himself again. "I am Mr. Sharp, I own citrus orchards at Trout Hall you know, you see I have this problem with juice quality of certain Citrus trees on my farm, I am wondering if you can resolve it for me," Mr. Sharp was very polite.

"Well, I work with sugarcane and I am not sure whether I understand problems with citrus fruits," Juggernaut was hesitant.

"Juice is juice, whether sugarcane or citrus, is it not?" Mr. Sharp was sharp like a razor blade in this thought process despite his age.

"Sure, but you can get help from the experts at Citrus Research Station on the island."

"I did but not happy with the results, so if you can help, it will be good," "I will pick you up tomorrow morning to visit Trout Hall."

The next day morning the driver was ready at the research station to pick up Juggernaut and he drove to Mr. Sharp's home on the hills overlooking the town. He and his wife were very generous at the breakfast. The drive to Trout Hall on upper Clarendon Hills was slow and the driver was apparently told to maintain 30 MPH by Mrs. Sharp.

Mr. Sharp family came to the island from Britain in late 1800s to farm and found excellent location to grow citrus fruits in the Parish of Clarendon. Oranges, tangerines, grape fruit, lemons and limes and anything that belong to citrus family is grown on their farm. Trout Hall orange juice is a popular brand on the island. Mr. Sharp gave a brief history about special citrus trees on his farm; decades ago, they found a citrus tree bearing peculiar shaped fruits. The fruit is larger than an average Grape fruit; the rind is pale yellow to bright yellow wrinkled like Bulldog skin and can be peeled easily; slightly pink to colorless flesh inside with abundant large sections with juice that is not too sweet, not acidic at all but with a unique tang to its taste. The amount of juice is plentiful in several large sections like drinking a small coconut. The fruit was given a name

"Ugli" for its appearance and with exclusive trade mark license for export. Nobody in the island can export "Ugli" fruit except the Sharp family.

"The problem now is that the juice is too watery and not tasty, it lost its tang over the years, I am hoping you would correct it," explained Mr. Sharp; on reaching the farm, Mr. Sharp came out of his car with help of his driver and stood tall with his hand stick and showed the "Ugli" fruits hanging from a nearby tree. The fruits really looked funny with their highly wrinkled skin. Juggernaut picked up a fruit and removed the peel easily and went on to eat only to wet his shirt with juice oozing out. It was virtually seedless with plenty segments separated easily with light pink to colorless juicy flesh. The juice is rich, sweet, lacks bitterness and acidity. It was the most delightful experience to taste the strange looking fruit. The juice tastes not like orange, not like grape fruit and not like tangerine but a combination all three. "A rare combination of citrus taste in one, only a cross pollination over a cross pollination and some natural mutation in nature could only produce a citrus variety like "Ugli" fruit thought Juggernaut.

Juggernaut collected leaf samples from selected "Ugli" trees known to produce the best and the worst quality fruits and in between along with soil samples to bring back to the lab for analysis. After carefully studying the analyses results, Juggernaut came out with a recommendation of plant nutrient combination to improve the juice quality that included foliar application of micro-nutrients for the first time.

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After few months, Juggernaut received a phone call from Mr. Sharp. I thank you for your help, you know my distributor in England supply Ugli fruit to the Royal family in England on a regular basis, apparently the Queen likes Ugli fruit for breakfast and I understand from him that she recognized an improvement in the taste with a bit more tang in the juice lately and liked it, that is a testimony for your good work, Mr. Sharp was slow in talking. Juggernaut was delighted to hear the news, particularly the comments from Queen Elizabeth noticing an improvement in the quality of Ugli fruit. Later Juggernaut received a bag full of Ugli fruits with improved taste at his doorsteps, a gift from Mr. Sharp.

Sometimes, Ugli fruits are available in supermarkets in US. Whenever Juggernaut notices Ugli on fruit stand, comments of Queen of England on breakfast Ugli as told by Mr. Sharp comes to his mind.

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