

Most useful and economically important plant families

Grass family	Scientific name: <i>Poaceae</i> or <i>Graminae</i> Grass family includes wheat, rice, corn, barley, oats, sugar, sorghum and millet – most important family in terms of world nutrition – 50% of humanities’ calories come from this family.
Legume family	Scientific name: <i>Fabaceae</i> or <i>Leguminosae</i> Legume family includes all beans (green beans, black beans, lima beans etc.), lentils, peas, tamarind, peanuts, and chickpeas.
Rose family	Scientific name: <i>Rosaceae</i> Rose family includes not only roses, but also apples, pears, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, crab apples and many ornamentals like roses, meadowsweet, hawthorn and pearlbush.
Coffee family	Scientific name: <i>Rubiaceae</i> Coffee is one of the most important cash crops of the tropics. The drugs quinine and ipecac come from plants of this family.
Citrus family	Scientific name: <i>Rutaceae</i> Citrus family includes all citrus fruits – orange, tangerine, lime, lemon, grapefruit, etc.
Squash family	Scientific name: <i>Cucurbitaceae</i> Squash family includes all those fruits with a rind or tough skin – squash, watermelon, cucumber, pumpkin, gourds, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, etc.
Potato or nightshade family	Scientific name: <i>Solanaceae</i> Potato or Nightshade family includes tomatoes, cayenne, red and green peppers, tomatillos, potatoes, eggplant and tobacco, also ornamentals such as jessamine. Many plants in this family have alkaloids that are poisonous or narcotic.
Palm family	Scientific name: <i>Areaceae</i> or <i>Palmae</i> Various palm species have multiple uses including foods like coconuts, dates, palm cabbage, peach palm fruits and oil palms. Other uses include furniture like the rattan palm, carnuba wax (found in car polish), vegetable ivory (used for carving), and many species are used for thatch.
Mustard family	Scientific name: <i>Brassicaceae</i> or <i>Cruciferae</i> Mustard family includes mustard, horseradish, wasabi, capers, radish, turnip, canola, rapeseed oil, cabbage, kale, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts (the last 5 come from the same species).
Carrot family	Scientific name: <i>Apiaceae</i> or <i>Umbiliferae</i> Carrot family includes carrots, celery, dill, caraway, fennel, parsley, parsnip, anise, ginseng and cumin.
Sapodilla family	Scientific name: <i>Sapotaceae</i> Sapodilla family includes some important tropical fruits such as sapodilla, mamey sapote, eggfruit and star apples. The latex of the sapodilla tree is called chicle and it is a base for chewing gum.
Soapberry family	Scientific name: <i>Sapindaceae</i> Soapberry family includes the temperate species maple and chestnut, and tropical fruits such as guarana, lychee, and akee. This family also contains saponins, which can be used to make soap.
Mallow family	Scientific name: <i>Malvaceae</i> Birthday parties would not be the same without the Mallow family: chocolate, cola and marshmallow come from this family; as well as okra, cotton and hibiscus.
Orchid family	Scientific name: <i>Orchidaceae</i> Orchids are important ornamentals worldwide. Vanilla also comes from this family.
Bromeliad family	Scientific name: <i>Bromeliaceae</i> Bromeliad family includes pineapples and many ornamentals.