

Cultural Information – Ilex
(EYE-leks)

<u>Light:</u>	Full or partial sun; a southern, eastern, or western exposure.
<u>Temperature:</u>	Maintain indoor temperatures above 60°. for maximum growth. However, they will tolerate lower temperatures down to the 30's without harm as long as it is not sustained.
<u>Humidity:</u>	Preferably above 50%; however, they can tolerate lower levels without any difficulty.
<u>Watering:</u>	Bring the soil to visual dryness between waterings and then thoroughly saturate.
<u>Fertilizer:</u>	Moderate feeders. Apply a balanced fertilizer like a 15-15-15 or a 7-9-5 weekly or biweekly from spring to fall.
<u>Pruning:</u>	When plants are young, pinching the tips of the expanding growth will help create a dense specimen and increase leaf volume. They do tend to have an outreaching growth habit which pruning and pinching controls. From these cuts the foliage can be used for tea.
<u>Insects and Disease:</u>	We see few if any problems with insects or diseases. Scale and mealy bugs can attack plants if exposed to other infected plants.
<u>Comments</u>	Ilex paraguariensis is an easy plant to culture. From small propagations it takes a couple of years before leaves can be harvested in large numbers. Growing in full sun and keeping temperatures for the most part above 60 degrees will increase leaf production.