PLANT FACT SHEET

Dioscorea oppositifolia L.

GENUS *Dioscorea* **FAMILY** Dioscoreaceae

COMMON NAMES Chinese yam, Cinnamon yam

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Tubers, Root

The tubers are cut and washed with successively with salt and fresh water to remove an alkaloid dioscorine then cooked and eaten.
The tubers are cooked and eaten. They are not glutinous so have little binding strength. They can be boiled, mashed, fried, or added to soups.
A starch is extracted from the roots.

DESCRIPTION

A yam. It is a large climber that keeps growing from year to year. The tuber is cylinder shaped and 50-90 cm long. The stem twines clockwise. It produces bulbils in the axils of leaves. The leaves are opposite and have 3-5 leaflets like fingers on a hand. They are 5-20 cm long by 3-8 cm wide.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows on the Deccan in India. It grows in open forest or along the edge of the forest. It is a cold hardy species. It grows on hillsides and steep valleys between 500-1,500 m altitude. In Sichuan.

PRODUCTION

Harvesting and Seed Production

In Sikkim tubers are available December to March.

NOTES

There are about 650 species of Dioscorea.
Dioscorea opposita is an illegitimate, superfluous name (ICBN Art. 52) for D. oppositifolia L.; non D. opposita auct. (= D. batatas Decne.)

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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