PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Amaranthus retroflexus* L.

**GENUS** *Amaranthus* **FAMILY** Amaranthaceae

**COMMON NAMES** Red-root Amaranth, Pigweed

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Leaves, Seeds, Stems

The young leaves are edible cooked. They are used in stews and pies. They are fried and used in soups. They can be high in oxalates.
The seeds are eaten in starch and cereal based preparations.
CAUTION: Amaranth grown in high nitrogen soils can accumulate nitrates which are poisonous in large quantities.

## DESCRIPTION

An annual herb which grows to 60-90 cm high. It has furry stems. The root is usually rosy red. The leaves and stems are often quite red in colour. The leaves are oval or sword shaped. The seed spikes are green and bristly. These can be at the top of the plant or in the axils of leaves.

## HABITAT

A temperate and Mediterranean plant. It grows in waste land and amongst crops in most temperate regions of the world. It will grow in the tropics. It can grow in arid places. It grows in Sichuan.

## PRODUCTION

### Cultivation

It can be grown from seed or cuttings. It can inhibit the germination and growth of other plants and vegetables.

## NOTES

There are about 60 Amaranthus species.

## PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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