



PLANT FACT SHEET

Brassica juncea (L.) Czerniak & Cass

GENUS *Brassica* FAMILY Brassicaceae

COMMON NAMES Indian mustard, Chinese mustard, Leaf mustard

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds - oil, Spice, Vegetable, Flowers

The leaves are cooked and eaten. They have a bitter taste, so the cooking water needs changing. They can be stir-fried, or added to soups and stews.

They can be eaten crystallised in vinegar or salt.

They can be used in salads.

The seeds can be fried then used as a spice. They also yield an edible oil. They can be sprouted.

The leaves are also pickled.

DESCRIPTION

It is an erect leafy annual cabbage plant. It grows to about 1 m high. The plant can vary a lot. The leaves are elliptical and deeply divided. They are dark green. The end segment of the leaves is oval. The leaves taper towards the stem and have a strong mustard flavour. The flowers are pale yellow. They have 4 petals. It produces a flower and seed pods at the top. The seed pod is long and narrow. It is 3-5 cm long. The seeds are reddish-brown.

HABITAT

A warm temperate plant. It is grown in some highland areas in the tropics. It is often grown as a cool season crop. Most varieties are not frost tolerant. It needs a fertile, well drained soil. A pH of 5.5-6.8 is suitable. It can tolerate poor soils. In the Himalayas in summer it grows to 3,600 m altitude. It can grow in arid places. It suits hardiness zones 9-11. Tasmania Herbarium. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

The seed is broadcast. They can be put in a nursery and transplanted. A spacing of 25 cm x 25 cm is suitable. Seed germinate in 5 days at 20-25°C.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants grow rapidly. Leaves can be harvested one month after planting. Leaves can be harvested several times. Whole plants can be harvested in about 45 days from transplanting.

NOTES

There are about 30 Brassica species and many cultivated varieties.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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