PLANT FACT SHEET

Helianthus tuberosus L.

GENUS *Helianthus* **FAMILY** Asteraceae

COMMON NAMES Jerusalem artichoke

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Rhizome, Tubers, Root, Vegetable, Flowers

The tubers are eaten boiled or baked. They can be steamed, fried, pickled, pureed, or used in soups and casseroles.
They can be eaten raw in salads.
(They are suitable for people with diabetes)
Roasted tubers are used as a coffee substitute.

DESCRIPTION

An upright perennial plant up to 1-2 m high and a spread of 1 m. The stem is erect and unbranched. The leaves are dull green and sword shaped. The flowers are yellow and daisy like. It produces fleshy underground stem tubers of irregular shape. The skin of these tubers is very thin and often coloured yellow or red. The flesh is white. Tubers can be 10 cm long and 6 cm wide. There are several cultivated varieties.

HABITAT

A temperate plant. Plants grow best when the temperature is 18°-26°C and frost free. They do best between 300 and 750 m altitude in the tropics. It needs light to medium well drained soils. Plants should be grown in an open sunny position. It is drought and frost resistant. It suits hardiness zones 7-9. In Sichuan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from vegetative setts. These can be dormant for 7 months before they will grow. The flowers on the plants are removed to increase the yield. Plants can be grown from seed. Tubers are often sweetest after a frost.

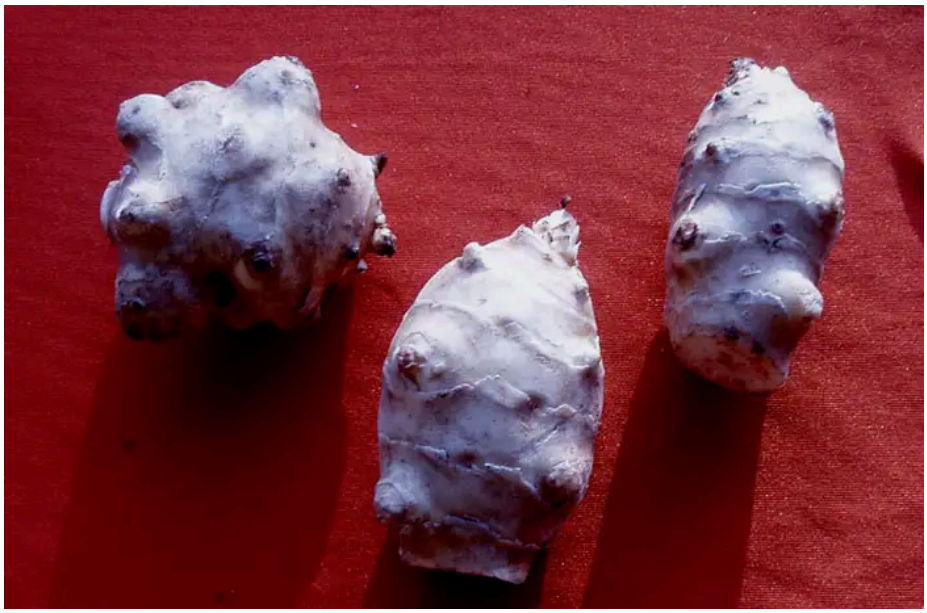
Harvesting and Seed Production

Harvesting can start after 3 months.

NOTES

Tubers contain inulin which can cause stomach wind in some people but is also tolerated by diabetics. Almost all Helianthus (60 species) in N and S America are edible.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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