PLANT FACT SHEET

Vicia ervilia (L.) Willd.

GENUS *Vicia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Bitter vetch, Lentil vetch

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Fruit

The seed are eaten in soup. They can also be boiled, roasted and made into flour.

DESCRIPTION

An annual herb. It is low and does not have tendrils. It grows up to 70 cm high. The leaves end with a short awn. There are 8-15 pairs of leaflets. The flowers are white with purple or red tinges. They are 6-9 mm long. There are 1-4 flowers in a group. The pods are yellow or red. They are 10-30 mm long and constricted between the seeds.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It grows in waste places and on stony ground. It grows in areas with an annual rainfall between 300-1,160 mm. It can grow in acid, neutral or alkaline soils. It can grow in soils with a pH between 5.6-8.2. It grows in areas with an annual temperature between 9°-20° C. It can grow from sea level up to 2,700 m above sea level in some locations. It can tolerate frost and drought. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds. It is often grown with cereal crops.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The average yield is 1,600 kg/ha.

NOTES

There are about 140 Vicia species. They are mostly temperate. The plant is used for cattle feed.

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