PLANT FACT SHEET

Alcea rosea L.

GENUS *Alcea* **FAMILY** Malvaceae

COMMON NAMES Hollyhock

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Leaves, Roots, Stem

The young leaves are eaten raw or cooked. The leaves are used for sarma in Turkey. They are rolled around a filling of rice or minced meat.
The inner portion of the young stems is eaten raw.
The flowers buds and petals are added raw to salads.
An edible starch can be made from the root.
The flower petals can be used for tea. They are also boiled in water to make sweet juice.

DESCRIPTION

A short lived perennial plant. It grows for about 2 years. It grows 1.5-2.5 m high and spreading to 60 cm wide. The stem is erect, leafy and flowering. The leaf stalks are 5-15 cm long. The leaf blade is nearly round and 6-16 cm across. There are 5-7 lobes arranged like fingers on a hand. The lobes are triangular. The flowers are in the axils of leaves. They are bowl shaped. The petals are crinkled. Flowers are red, purple, pink, white, yellow and black and 6-10 cm across.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. Plants are frost hardy. Plants can tolerate temperatures down to about -15°C. It grows best in a sheltered sunny position and in a heavy rich soil. It will grow in most soils. It is resistant to frost but sensitive to drought. The soil should be well drained. It suits hardiness zones 3-10. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed, division of the clump or by cuttings. Seeds germinate in 2-3 weeks at 20°C. To avoid frosts seeds are sown indoors 8 weeks before the last frost. The seed are sown 6 mm deep. It should be pruned back after flowering.

NOTES

There are about 60 Alcea species. This one is used in medicine.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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