PLANT FACT SHEET

Vaccinium vitis-idaea L.

GENUS *Vaccinium* **FAMILY** Ericaceae

COMMON NAMES Lingonberry

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves - tea, Flowers

The fruit are used in preserves and pastries and as a sour sauce to accompany meat dishes.
The fruit can be cooked with rose-hips and sugar to make jam.
They are used for juice and to flavour yoghurt.
The leaves are used for a tea drink.

DESCRIPTION

A creeping low evergreen shrub. It forms mats. It grows 15 cm high and spreads 0.6-1.2 m wide. The leaves are small and oval. They are 5-20 mm long and 5 mm wide. They are deep green but have black spots underneath. The leaves turn bronze colour in autumn. The flowers are white or pink and bell shaped. They are in clusters. The fruit are bright red and juicy. They are 6-8 mm across. They are edible. There are several named cultivated varieties.

HABITAT

It is a cool temperate plant. They are found in forests near the Arctic. They need acidic soils. A pH of 4.5-5.0 is suitable. It grows on poor dry soil and on peat. It suits hardiness zones 2-8.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

They can be grown from seed, rhizomes and cuttings. If runners are used they produce within 2 years. Stem cuttings of the firm current year's growth are used. They root easily in a mixture of peat and sand and humidity or mist is helpful. Plants are spaced about 45 cm apart.

Harvesting and Seed Production

A mature plant can produce 1 kg of berries.

NOTES

They have health benefits.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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