PLANT FACT SHEET

Eutrema japonicum (Miq.) Koidz.

GENUS *Eutrema* **FAMILY** Brassicaceae

COMMON NAMES Wasabi, Japanese horseradish

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Stalk, Root, Rhizome, Vegetable, Spice

The underground stems or rhizomes are used as a spice called wasabi. It has a strong fiery taste. The outer skin is scraped off and the green inner part finely ground.
The leaves, flowers are leaf stalks and freshly sliced rhizome are soaked in salt water then used to make a pickle.

DESCRIPTION

A cabbage family herb. It is a small plant which grows up to 40-60 cm high. It keeps growing from year to year. The plant has a stout rhizome. It has thick stems. It is knobbly and grey-green. The leaves are crinkled and heart shaped. They are like pumpkin leaves. The flowers are small and white. They have 4 petals. The fruit are long narrow seed pods.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It grows beside cold mountain streams. The small roots grow best in clear streams. It needs good aeration around the roots. Wasabi requires cool shady conditions. It is cultivated, also naturalised in wet areas along streams in mountains; near sea level to 2500 m altitude in China.

PRODUCTION

Harvesting and Seed Production

The rhizomes take 2-3 years to develop. The rhizome should be used fresh as it quickly loses its flavour.

NOTES

Chemical composition: Protein = 5.1%. Fat = 0.2%. Carbohydrate = 22.3%. Ash = 1.27%. The main compound causing the pungent taste is sinigrin.

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