PLANT FACT SHEET

Mucuna pruriens var. utilis (Wall.ex Wight) Baker ex Burck

GENUS *Mucuna* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Velvet bean

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Pods, Seeds

The young leaves, young pods and ripe seeds are edible cooked. They are also made into pickles.
The beans are cooked and the water discarded and this is repeated until the beans are not bitter. This probably removes cyanide. Ripe seeds are roasted and eaten. They are also used as a coffee substitute.
Caution: Be sure the edible form is chosen.

DESCRIPTION

A climbing bean with vines 2-3 m long. It is an annual herb. The stems are slender and twining. The leaves have 3 leaflets. Leaves are hairy when young but without hairs when older. Leaflets are about 10-18 cm long x 8-15 cm wide. Leaves are dark green above and paler underneath. Flowers are purplish. Pods are 9-14 cm long, hard, curved and covered with soft hairs. There are 4-6 white seeds inside.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. A bean of low altitudes. The wild species is used as a cover crop in coconut plantations. It needs a sunny location. It can grow in arid places. In Sichuan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. They can also be grown from cuttings.

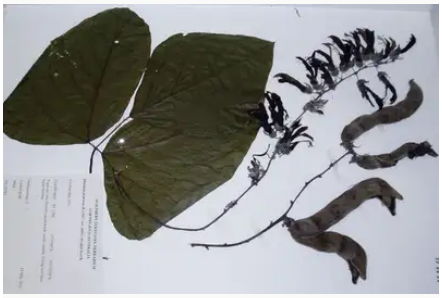
NOTES

There are about 100 Mucuna species. They grow in tropical places.
It is a valuable green manure crop especially for maize.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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