PLANT FACT SHEET

Allium chinense G. Don

GENUS *Allium* **FAMILY** Amaryllidaceae

COMMON NAMES Chinese Chives

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Leaves, Root, Bulb, pod, Spice, Vegetable

The bulbs are eaten raw or cooked. They are pickled in salt, soy sauce and sugar.
The leaves are eaten raw or cooked.
The flowers and seed pods are used raw to flavour salads.

DESCRIPTION

An onion family plant. The bulb can be 4-5 cm long by the second or third year. The bulbs taper into the leaves. They are narrow and oval. The plant forms a clump. The leaves can stick upwards or lie over. The leaves are 3-5 angled in cross section. They are 20-40 cm long by 1-5 mm wide. The flowers are on stalks with flowers on equal length stalks from one point. The flower stalk is solid. The flowers are bell shaped. The flower parts are light violet. There are 15-20 flowers on each stalk.

HABITAT

It grows in light well drained soils. It can tolerate poor soils. They need full sun. It grows in the tropics and subtropics in China. Long days promote bulb and flower formation. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from seed or by division of bulbs. Seed are rarely produced so bulbs are normally used. They are planted in late summer just below the soil surface. They are spaced at 20 cm apart.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Bulbs are harvested after leaves die back. For young bulbs and white stems plants are harvested before the leaves die back.

NOTES

It contains about 3.1% protein, 0.12% fat, 18.3% soluble carbohydrate, 0.7% ash. There are about 300-700 Allium species. Most species of Allium are edible (Flora of China). All alliums are edible but they may not all be worth eating!
They have also been put in the family Alliaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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