



PLANT FACT SHEET

Glycine max (L.) Merr

GENUS *Glycine* FAMILY Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Soybean, Soya

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Leaves, Spice, Vegetable

The young pods and ripe seeds are eaten. They are used for flour. The dried seeds are boiled or baked and used in soups, stews and casseroles. The seeds are used for oil. Toasted seeds are eaten like a snack. Strongly roasted seeds are used for coffee. Soy flour is used for noodles, pasta, confectionary and other foods. The beans are fermented and used in a range of foods.

Sometimes the young leaves are eaten.

The seeds are also used for sprouts and for making cooking oil and soya sauce etc.

Because soybean contains a trypsin inhibitor they should be cooked and even the sprouts should be lightly cooked.

DESCRIPTION

A small erect bean up to 60 cm tall. It grows each year from seed. Straggling kinds can occur. Stems, leaves and pods are softly hairy. The leaves have 3 leaflets. The leaflets have stalks. Flowers are small and white or blue. They occur in groups in the axils of leaves. The pods are broad, flat and hairy. Pods have 2-4 seeds. The seeds can be yellow to black.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It suits lowland areas. It can be grown from sea level to 2,100 m altitude. Many varieties will not flower in the tropics (short days). It needs fertile soil. The best soil acidity is pH 5.5 to 7.0. It is damaged by frost. In Nepal it grows to 1800 m altitude. It suits hardiness zones 7-8. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is grown from seed. Seeds need to be inoculated with bacteria before planting. The correct one is *Bradyrhizobium japonicum*. Plants need to be about 20 cm apart.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants flower about 8 weeks after sowing and pods mature about 16 weeks after sowing. Often plants are pulled up and hung up before threshing out the seed.

NOTES

There are 10 Glycine species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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