PLANT FACT SHEET

Eleusine indica (L.) Gaertn.

GENUS *Eleusine* **FAMILY** Poaceae

COMMON NAMES Bermuda grass, Indian goosegrass

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Shoots, Cereal

The seeds are used as food in times of food shortage. They are parched and ground into flour for cakes, porridge or gruel. It is used in kreb a grain mixture eaten in Chad.
They are also used for alcoholic drinks. Caution: Alcohol is a cause of cancer.
The young shoots are eaten. They can be eaten raw or steamed and eaten with rice.

DESCRIPTION

A tufted annual grass. It grows up to 0.6 m tall. It has many branches from the base and tough wiry stems. The stems are slender and flattened. The leaves are 17 cm long and 3-8 mm wide. The leaves are covered with a bluish-green bloom. They are folded. The flower spikes are divided like fingers on a hand except for one which is single and below. The flowers do not have stalks and the flower spikes are 4-15 cm long. The seed heads shatter at maturity dropping their seed.

HABITAT

It is mainly a tropical and subtropical plant. In the tropics it grows from sea level to 1800 m altitude. It tends to grow in places high in nitrogen. It grows on clayey soil. It can grow in arid places. In Argentina it grows below 500 m above sea level. Tasmanian Herbarium. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is mostly self sown from seed. Seed are spread in animal manure.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It Australia plants flower and fruit in April.

NOTES

It commonly becomes self sown and considered a problem in some situations. It has 2 sets of chromosomes compared to 4 in finger millet but it can cross with finger millet. It is used in Chinese medicine. There are 9 Eleusine species. They are mostly in tropical Africa.

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