PLANT FACT SHEET

Vaccinium macrocarpon Aiton

GENUS *Vaccinium* **FAMILY** Ericaceae

COMMON NAMES American cranberry, Cranberry

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The fruit are used for pies, tarts, relishes and for sauce.
They are used for juice.
They are especially used for cranberry sauce with turkey meat.
The dried fruit are called craysons.

DESCRIPTION

A perennial shrub. It grows 0.9 m high and spreads 1.5-3 m wide. It is low growing and evergreen. It forms roots as it spreads. The leaves are dark green. They are lighter underneath. The leaves are 5-8 mm long by 2-3 mm wide. The leaves have round tips and edges that roll under. The flowers are mauve. The stamens are longer than the petals. The flower stalks are slender and curved. The fruit are red. They are 12-20 mm across. They have 4 locules full of seeds. The seeds are small and there can be a few or up to 50 in each fruit. The fruit deepen in colour as they ripen. There are many named cultivated varieties.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. They grow in sandy bogs that are irrigated. It grows in damp acidic soils mainly between 40°N and 50°N. It needs a very acidic soil. A pH of 4.0-5.5 is suitable. It suits hardiness zones 2-9.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are usually grown from prunings from old plants. Cuttings can be used. They are pushed well into the damp ground leaving only about 5 cm exposed. Conditions should be moist and humid but not waterlogged.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The flowers and fruit are produced on side shoots from the upright vines. The fruit are harvested by flooding the marshes and collecting them as they float. A useful crop can be harvested 4 years after planting.

NOTES

It has anticancer properties.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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