PLANT FACT SHEET

Celosia trigyna L.

GENUS *Celosia* **FAMILY** Amaranthaceae

COMMON NAMES Silver spinach

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Flowers, Seeds, Vegetable

The young shoots and leaves are cooked and eaten. They are finely cut and used in soups, stews and sauces. They are also used in soups and sauces.
Because they can be bitter they need extensive cooking or mixing with other foods.

DESCRIPTION

A herb. It is branched and straggling. It grows 25-120 cm tall. The leaves are alternate. The lower leaves have long leaf stalks. The leaves are oval and about 8 cm long. The plant looks like Amaranthus hybridus until it starts to flower. Where the leaf stalk joins the stem there is a pair of small moon-shaped leaflets that lie around the stem. The small flowers are crowded together in separate clusters. They are 5-10 cm long. They are white or silvery. The fruit is a capsule which is almost round and has several seeds.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in tropical Africa. It grows in lowlands and highlands. It is often along the coast but grows from sea level to 1,960 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places. It needs a rainfall or up to 2,500 mm and an average temperature of 25-30°C. It cannot tolerate a temperature below 15°C. It is best on fertile, well drained soils.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown by seeds. Seeds germinate in 4-5 days. It grows for 90-120 days. Because the seeds are small they are best mixed with sand to give a more even distribution.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants can be uprooted and harvested or leaves removed. Harvests of 4-5 t/ha can be achieved from weekly harvests over 2 months. Plants can be dried in the sun and and stored for 6 months. In humid areas leaves are available throughout the year.

NOTES

There are about 40-50 Celosia species.

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