



PLANT FACT SHEET

Sesbania sesban (L.) Merrill

GENUS *Sesbania* FAMILY Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Egyptian sesban, River-bean

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Roots, Seeds, Fruit, Flowers, Leaves, Vegetable

The leaves and young flowers are eaten. They are often fried or pounded with rice and beans.

The seeds are used for food in times of scarcity. (They have a protein inhibitor preventing the protein being well used.) The seeds are also fermented into a flavouring paste.

The young tender pods are cooked or used in chutneys and salads.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub. It grows to 6 m high. The bark is reddish-brown. The leaves are made up of 10-25 pairs of opposite leaflets. The leaflets are oblong. They can be 15 mm long by 3 mm wide. The flowers are yellow and pea shaped. The standard petal is often speckled with finely veined dark maroon. They occur in many flowered sprays. These are up to 15 cm long. The fruit are long slender pods. They are 30 cm long by 0.3 cm wide. They are often slightly curved.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It occurs in low lying areas usually near water. It can survive water-logging and salty soils. It grows in areas with an annual rainfall between 350-1,500 mm above sea level. It grows in savannah woodland. It can grow in arid places. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown as a hedge. It can be cut back and will re-grow.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is fast growing. It only lives for short time.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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