PLANT FACT SHEET

Chamaecrista mimosoides (L.) Greene

GENUS *Chamaecrista* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Sensitive Senna, Five-leaved Cassia, Japanese Tea bush

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves - tea, Pods, Leaves, Seeds

The young leaves are used as tea.
The shoots and young leaves are cooked and used as a vegetable.
The young tender pods are boiled and eaten.
The fully ripe seeds are boiled.

DESCRIPTION

A herb or small shrub. It can grow each year from seed or keep growing from year to year. It grows to 1 m high. The stem are wiry and come from a woody rootstock. It is a very variable plant. The leaves are 3-8 cm long and are made up of 20-80 pairs of small leaflets. These are 0.5 cm long by 0.1 cm wide. They are very narrow, thin and crowded. The leaf stalk has a round gland near the top. They have sharp points. They clasp one another along the stalk. They are sensitive to touch. The flowers are about 2 cm across. They occur either on their own or as 2-3 together. They occur in the axils of upper leaves. They are bright yellow. The fruit are straight narrow pods. The pods are 3-4 cm long and 0.5 cm across. They are flattened. There are about 20-25 seeds.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in upland savannah and bushland. It is often along rivers and ditches. In Ethiopia it grows between 1,000 and 2,800 metres altitude. In Papua New Guinea it grows between 60 and 1800 m altitude. It grows in grassland and can grow in standing water. It grows from sea level to 1,750 m above sea level. It is often in dry sandy soil. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

They grow quickly. Plants can be short lived.

NOTES

There are 100 Cassia species. This group has been revised to a smaller more consistent group. Also as Caesalpinaceae.

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