PLANT FACT SHEET

Lactuca sativa L.

GENUS *Lactuca* **FAMILY** Asteraceae

COMMON NAMES Lettuce

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds, Vegetable

Eaten raw or in soups.
The sprouted seeds can be used in salads or sandwiches.
Leaves can be dried and stored.
The leaves are used for sarma in Turkey. They are rolled around a filling of rice or minced meat.

DESCRIPTION

A leafy vegetable which forms a heart or clump of tightly wrapped leaves under cool temperature conditions. The leaves are often pale green. Plants are about 20 cm high. In the tropics a leafy annual grown for its succulent crisp radical leaves. The lowland species has loose leaves, crumpled with frilly margins while the leaves of the highland variety fold over the growing point to form a head; with light green almost white leaves of a greasy texture and coarse veins and prominent midrib. There are many lettuce varieties.

HABITAT

A temperate plant. Plants are grown throughout the country of Papua New Guinea but particularly in the highlands and mainly for sale. It grows best between 700-2,350 m above sea level in PNG. Leafy forms are used in cooking in many parts of Asia. It suits hardiness zones 6-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds and often transplanted. Seedlings are transplanted after 30-35 days and spaced 45 cm apart. Seeds need to be sown very shallowly. In hot places lettuce develops a bitter taste if transplanted or checked in their growth. Cutting the tap root can stop plants seeding quickly.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Leafy varieties are harvested after 50-60 days.

NOTES

It is rich in minerals like sodium, phosphorus, calcium, magnesium and vitamins. There are about 20 Lactuca species.

PICTURES

Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Ahmad, L., et al, 2021, An ethnobotanical survey of wild food plants used by the local communities of Kumrat Valley in District Upper Dir, Pakistan. Ethnobotany Research & Applications 22:20

Ambasta, S.P. (Ed.), 2000, The Useful Plants of India. CSIR India. p 312

Anderson, E. F., 1993, Plants and people of the Golden Triangle. Dioscorides Press. p 214

Andrare, G. M. M., et al, 2023, Plantas Alimenticias Nao Convencionais (PANC) Nos Levantamentos Etnobotanicos do Brazil. Novos Cadernos NAEA v. 25 No. 2 p 202

Ara, R. I. T., 2015, Leafy Vegetables in Bangladesh. Photon eBooks. p 142

Arellanes, Y., et al, 2013, Influence of traditional markets on plant management in the Tehuacan Valley. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine 9:38

Bernholt, H. et al, 2009, Plant species richness and diversity in urban and peri-urban gardens of Niamey, Niger. Agroforestry Systems 77:159-179

Bhatia, H., et al, 2021, Wild Edible Fruits and Vegetables of Himachal Pradesh. Journal of Research: The Bede Athenaeum Indian Journals.com March 2021, Vol. 12 No. 1 (53-66)

Bianchini, F., Corbetta, F., and Pistoia, M., 1975, Fruits of the Earth. Cassell. p 50

Bodkin, F., 1991, Encyclopedia Botanica. Cornstalk publishing, p 613

Bourke, R. M., Altitudinal limits of 230 economic crop species in Papua New Guinea. Terra australis 32.

Bremness, L., 1994, Herbs. Collins Eyewitness Handbooks. Harper Collins. p 255

Brouk, B., 1975, Plants Consumed by Man. Academic Press, London. p 113

Burkill, I.H., 1966, A Dictionary of the Economic Products of the Malay Peninsula. Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Vol 2 (I-Z) p 1316

Bussman, R. W., et al, 2016, A comparative ethnobotany of Khevsureti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Tusheti, Svaneti, and Racha-Lechkhumi, Republic of Georgia (Sakartvelo), Caucasus. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine (2016) 12:4

Bussman, R. W. et al, 2017, Ethnobotany of Samtskhe-Javakheti, Sakartvelo (Republic of Georgia), Caucasus. Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge Vol. 16(1) pp 7-24

Bussman, R. W., et al, 2021, Unity in diversity—food plants and fungi of Sakartvelo (Republic of Georgia), Caucasus. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine (2021) 17:72 p 6

Cheifetz, A., (ed), 1999, 500 popular vegetables, herbs, fruits and nuts for Australian Gardeners. Random House p 71

Chin, H. F., 1999, Malaysian Vegetables in Colour. Tropical Press. p 19

Curtis, W.M., 1963, The Students Flora of Tasmania Vol 2 p 388

D'Ambrosio, U., & Puri, R. K., 2016, Foodways in transition: food plants, diet and local perceptions of change in a Costa Rican Ngäbe community. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine (2016) 12:3 p 22

Dogan, Y., et al, 2015, Of the importance of a leaf: the ethnobotany of sarma in Turkey and the Balkans. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine, 11:56

Facciola, S., 1998, Cornucopia 2: a Source Book of Edible Plants. Kampong Publications, p 40

Foo, J.T.S.(ed), 1996, A Guide to Common Vegetables. Singapore Science Foundation. p 26

French, B.R., 1986, Food Plants of Papua New Guinea, A Compendium. Asia Pacific Science Foundation p 140

French, B.R., 2010, Food Plants of Solomon Islands. A Compendium. Food Plants International Inc. p 159

Furusawa, T., et al, 2014, Interaction between forest biodiversity and people's used of forest resources in Roviana, Solomon Islands: implications for biocultural conservation under socioeconomic changes. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine, 10:10

Gabrielian, E. & Zohary, D.: Wild relatives of food crops native to Armenia and Nakhichevan. – Fl. Medit. 14: 5-80. 2004. – ISSN 1120-4052.

Grubben, G. J. H. and Denton, O. A. (eds), 2004, Plant Resources of Tropical Africa 2. Vegetables. PROTA, Wageningen, Netherlands. p 349

Grubben, G.J.H., 2004. Lactuca sativa L. [Internet] Record from Protabase. Grubben, G.J.H. & Denton, O.A. (Editors). PROTA (Plant Resources of Tropical Africa), Wageningen, Netherlands. < http://database.prota.org/search.htm>. Accessed 16 October 2009.

Hadfield, J., 2001, The A-Z of Vegetable Gardening in South Africa. Struik p 109

Herklots, G. A. C., 1972, Vegetables in South-East Asia. Allen & Unwin. p 132

Hossain, U. & Rahman, A., 2018, Study and quantitative analysis of wild vegetable floral diversity available in Barisal district, Bangladesh. Asian J. Med. Biol. Res. 2018, 4 (4), 362-371

http://www.botanic-gardens-ljubljana.com/en/plants

Hu, Shiu-ying, 2005, Food Plants of China. The Chinese University Press. p 739

Jamous, R.M., et al, 2026, Antidiabetic and antioxidant potentials of selected traditional Palestinian medicinal plants. Academia Biology 2016, 4 p 3

Jardin, C., 1970, List of Foods Used In Africa, FAO Nutrition Information Document Series No 2.p 85

Kapelle, M., et al, 2000, Useful plants within a Campesino Community in a Costa Rican Montane Cloud Forest. Mountain Research and Development, 20(2): 162-171.

Katz, E., et al, 2012, No greens in the forest? Note on the limited consumption of greens in the Amazon. Acta Soc Bot Pol 81(4):283–293

Full reference list (39 more) at https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/6d78f8a4-9411-47f2-afae-1cf343a63ae5

PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

LICENCE CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/6d78f8a4-9411-47f2-afae-1cf343a63ae5