



PLANT FACT SHEET

Mentha spicata L.

GENUS *Mentha* FAMILY Lamiaceae

COMMON NAMES Spearmint

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Herb, Vegetable, Spice, Leaves - tea

The leaves are used for flavouring food. They are used in salads, sauces, soups, fruit drinks, vegetable dishes, desserts, and dressings.

They are also pickled and used in chutney.

The essential oil is used for flavouring.

The fresh or dried leaves are used for tea.

DESCRIPTION

A creeping leafy herb with numerous long runners. It has underground stems. It grows to 50 cm high. The leaves have a strong smell. The plant tends to be stiff and upright with long narrow pointed leaves. The leaves have short stalks. The leaves are 2-3.5 cm long by 1.5-2.5 cm wide. They have teeth long the edge. It has pink flowers at the top. They occur in a ring of many flowers. and small brown seeds.

HABITAT

A cool temperate plant. In the tropics it mainly occurs in the highlands. It suits damp ground. In Nepal it grows to about 2500 m altitude. It grows in moist, open places. It suits hardiness zones 3-10. Tasmania Herbarium. Hobart Botanical Gardens. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are easily grown by using runners or rooted cuttings. They can be grown from seed.

NOTES

There are 25 *Mentha* species.

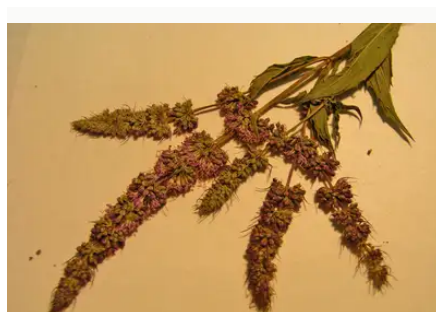
PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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

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