PLANT FACT SHEET

Zizania aquatica L.

GENUS *Zizania* **FAMILY** Poaceae

COMMON NAMES Wild rice, Annual wild rice

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Stem, Cereal, Shoots

The grains are cooked like rice in water for 25-40 minutes then eaten.
The grain can be ground and used in cereal dishes. It can also be used for breads, muffins, cakes, pasta and for thickening soups.
It can be popped and eaten with maple syrup.

DESCRIPTION

A millet grass. It is a tall annual grass. The stems are upright and usually 1-3 m tall. They are stout. The leaf blades are long and narrow. They can be 0.3-1 m long and 2-5 cm wide. They are soft. They have many flowers in open branched clusters. These can be 60 cm high and the side branches 15-20 cm long. The lower branches have male flowers and the upper branches have female flowers. The seed case is tipped with a long stiff hair like structure. The seeds are narrow, hard and brown. Seeds often easily fall off the grass.

HABITAT

It grows in swamps and streams. It can grow in fresh or brackish water. It cannot survive in stagnant water. A water depth of 15 cm is suitable. It needs plenty of sunlight.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown by seeds.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Ripe seeds easily fall from the plant. Seeds are normally harvested with a boat and the heads are bent over the boat then tapped to allow seed to fall. The grains are then dried. The grains are separated by threshing or rubbing.

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