



PLANT FACT SHEET

Anethum graveolens L.

GENUS *Anethum* FAMILY Apiaceae

COMMON NAMES Dill

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds, Fruit, Herb, Spice, Vegetable, Flowers

The seeds are used to flavour foods. They are added to pickles.

The young leaves can be eaten. They have an aniseed flavour and are used in soups, salads, sauces, and with vegetables. The flowers are also used.

It is one of the main ingredients in curry powder.

The leaves and seeds are used for tea.

DESCRIPTION

A fine leafy herb up to about 1 m tall. It can spread 50 cm across. It is an annual plant regrowing each year from seeds. The root is long and wiry. The stems of the plant are smooth, dark green and with pale stripes. They are finely grooved and hollow. The leaves are bluish-green and like a feather. They can be 35 cm long. The leaves are twice divided and have a sheath wrapping around the stem at the base. The small leaflets are like threads. Flowers are yellow and in flat compound arrangements where flowers are on stalks coming from one point. These flower arrangements can be 9 cm across. The fruit are oval one seeded dry ribbed fruits. Plants have an aniseed scent. The fruit are 1.5 times as long as wide. There are several named cultivars.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It is suited to shady places but does best in sunny positions. It is easily damaged by wind. It is frost resistant but drought tender. It needs moist, well drained, humus rich soil. In hot weather it produces flowers quickly. It is best with temperatures of 16-18°C. A pH of 5.6-6.5 is best. It grows below 1,900 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places. It suits hardiness zones 8-10. In Sichuan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. They are not easily transplanted. Seed are therefore best sown where they are to grow. Seed should be 1 cm deep and with 25 cm between plants. (Dill and fennel can cross pollinate.)

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants are fast growing. The leaves can be cut for use at any time, but they are at their best just before flowering. Plants can be cut 6 weeks after planting. Seeds are harvested when the plants are mature and have finished flowering and the fruits are fully formed. Harvesting during the cool of morning or evening avoids seeds being

shattered and lost.

NOTES

There are 2 (4) *Anethum* species.

Source of essential oils, proteins, fiber, fatty oil, carbohydrates and macroelements (calcium, potassium, magnesium, phosphorus, sodium), vitamin A and niacin.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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