PLANT FACT SHEET

Akebia trifoliata (Thunb.) Koidz.

GENUS *Akebia* **FAMILY** Lardizabalaceae

COMMON NAMES Three Leaf Akebia

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves - tea

The ripe fruit is eaten raw. It can also be used for drinks.
The dried young leaves are used as a herbal tea.

DESCRIPTION

A climbing plant. It is woody. It grows up to 9 m long. In colder places it looses its leaves. The leaves have 3 leaflets. Young leaves are bronze red then turn green. It loses its leaves during the year. The flowers are purple. The flowers have a sweet scent. The fruit looks somewhat like a deep-purple coloured sausage. The fruit is 7 - 13 cm long.

HABITAT

Plants grow naturally in rocky places in woods and thickets to 1800 metres in China, Japan and Korea. It needs well drained moist soil. It can grow in acid or alkaline soils. Dormant plants can withstand heavy frosts but plants with shoots are damaged. It can stand temperatures down to -10°C. In mild climates plants do not lose their leaves. It can grow in shade but does better in the sun. It grows in Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed. If possible use fresh seed or for stored seed give it one months cold treatment. Seed should be sown on the surface of the soil. The seed usually germinates in 1 - 3 months at 15°C. Plants do not transplant easily. Plants do not transplant easily. Plants do well climbing on deciduous trees. Hand pollination helps fruit bearing. As plants are probably self sterile 2 plants from different sources should be grown together. Plants can be grown from cuttings of the vine or root. Plants can also be grown by layering.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants are fast growing. In China plants flower in April and May and fruit in June to September.

NOTES

There are about 4-5 Akebia species.
It is also considered a medicine.

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