PLANT FACT SHEET

Vitis vinifera L.

GENUS *Vitis* **FAMILY** Vitaceae

COMMON NAMES Grapevine, European grape

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Fruit, Leaves, Oil, Herb, Flavouring, Sap

The fruit are eaten ripe and also used for juice and wines, champagnes and brandies .
Sometimes young slightly acid leaves are eaten. The leaves are used for sarma in Turkey. They are rolled around a filling of rice or minced meat.
The dried fruit are eaten as raisins.
The flowering shoots are eaten as a vegetable. They can also be pickled.

DESCRIPTION

A woody vine which keeps growing from year to year. It is often pruned to reduce its size. It climbs by coiled tendrils which attach to objects. It has large leaves which are roughly heart shaped. They can be entire or be deeply divided into 3-5 lobes. Leaves can be 20 cm across. The edges of the leaf are sharply and irregularly toothed. The tip of the leaf is pointed and the base is rounded. Sometimes the leaves are hairy. The flowers are small and yellow-green. They occur in clusters which are 5-20 cm long and beside the leaves. The 5 green petals drop off together to show 5 central stamens and the ovary. These bear clusters of fleshy fruit. The fruit is a berry which is generally oval and juicy. The skin can be yellow or violet-black. They are 1-4 cm long. The flesh is edible. They contain a few hard seeds. There are 10,000 cultivated varieties.

HABITAT

A subtropical plant. It mainly grows in Mediterranean-type climates with hot dry summers and cool rainy winters. It needs shelter from the wind. In Nepal it grows up to 1400 m altitude. A pH of 6.5-7.5 is suitable. It suits hardiness zones 6-9.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

They are mostly grown from hardwood cuttings. It needs a trellis for support. It is normally pruned to control the growth. A spacing of 2.4 m by 3 m is suitable. Vines are pruned when they have lost their leaves. Pruning in the first year is designed to form the permanent shape of the plant. Normally it is pruned to allow a single stem with two branches just below the trellis.

NOTES

There are 60 to 70 species of Vitis.

PICTURES



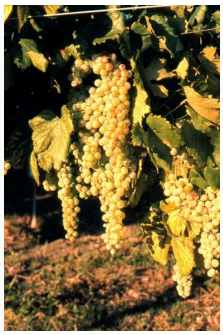
Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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