PLANT FACT SHEET

Use with caution

This plant can be harmful if it is eaten raw, in large amounts or without the right preparation. Read the whole fact sheet before use.

Euphorbia lathyris L.

GENUS *Euphorbia* **FAMILY** Euphorbiaceae

COMMON NAMES Garden Spurge, Caper Spurge

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Flowers, Root - drink

The seeds are used as a substitute for capers. They are first steeped in salt water, then in vinegar.
The root is used for fermenting beer.
CAUTION: The seeds are poisonous. Caution: All Euphorbias or spurges have irritating sap and many have chemicals that can cause cancer.

DESCRIPTION

A herb or shrub. It has a stout erect stem. The leaves are almost opposite. They are dark bluish green and do not have a leaf stalk. The leaf surface is paler underneath. The sap can irritate the skin and is possibly poisonous. The fruit look like capers (Capparis spinosa).

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It can grow in arid places. It suits hardiness zones 6-10. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown by seeds.

NOTES

There are about 2000 Euphorbia species. Most Euphorbias have sap which irritates the skin. It has anticancer properties.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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