PLANT FACT SHEET

Artemisia dracunculus L.

GENUS *Artemisia* **FAMILY** Asteraceae

COMMON NAMES Tarragon, French Tarragon, Russian tarragon

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Herb, Spice, Seeds, Root, Stem, Vegetable

CAUTION: The oil is poisonous. The oil can be extracted by oil distillation and used in flavouring.
The leaves are used for their flavouring. They are used in salads, vegetable dishes, and for flavouring mayonnaise, jellies, vinegar and liqueurs.
They are used to make alcoholic drinks. (Caution: Alcohol is a cause of cancer)
The seeds are eaten raw or cooked for their oily texture.

DESCRIPTION

A bushy herb. It keeps growing from year to year. It grows 1.5 m high and spreads 90 cm high. The stalks are wiry and form a tangled mass. It can be 1 m high. The leaves are smooth, dark-green, glossy and narrow. They are 2.5-3.7 cm long. The leaves are opposite. The leaves have an aroma. The flowers are small and white. They are in round flower heads. These form long spikes. Often seed is not sett.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It does best in well drained soil and a sunny position. It cannot tolerate frost. In the Himalayas it grows between 2,700-4,700 m altitude. It is often in stony places. It suits hardiness zones 5-9. It the tropics it is grown in mountainous regions.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are propagated from division of the root or by taking cuttings. It needs to be replanted every three years. This is best from tip cuttings. Seeds normally will not grow.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The leaves can be dried and stored. Stems are cut and hung in a dark location with good air circulation then the leaves are removed after a few days.

NOTES

There are about 300 Artemisia species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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