



PLANT FACT SHEET

Allium fistulosum L.

GENUS *Allium* FAMILY Amaryllidaceae

COMMON NAMES Japanese bunching onion, Spring onion

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Plant, Herb, Flowers, Vegetable, Bulb, Spice

The bulbs are eaten raw or cooked.

The leaves are eaten raw or cooked.

The flowers are used raw to flavour salads.

DESCRIPTION

An onion family plant. A bulb plant but the bulb is indistinct. It grows to 60 cm high and 20 cm wide. The roots are side roots and fibrous. They grow in large clumps. The leaves are rounded in cross section and hollow. They grow to 15-30 cm long by 5-20 mm wide. The bulbs are very small and 4-8 cm long but only 5-25 mm across. The plant produces many side buds which develop as offshoots. Flowers grow on a stalk which comes from underground and there are many flowers on stalks around one head. This hollow stalk is 40-80 cm long. The flowers are yellow and they open from the top of the flower head downwards. There can sometimes be bulbils on the flower head.

HABITAT

A temperate plant. It prefers a sunny position and a light well drained soil. It prefers a pH in the range 6.5 to 7.5, but it tolerates a pH in the range 4.9 to 7.5. A hardy plant which produces leaves throughout the winter. They are also tolerant of high temperatures and can grow in the tropics. Plants yield better when grown above 1,000 m in the tropics. In PNG it has been recorded from sea level to 2,800 m above sea level. Temperatures above 25°C give less production. It suits hardiness zones 5-9. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from seed or division of the bulbs. Bulbs should be planted fairly deeply. These multiply producing more bulbs. Seeds are transplanted when 10 cm high. A spacing of 7-10 cm is suitable. In China soil is heaped up around the bulb to make it elongated. Seed production in the tropics is possible above about 1,000 m above sea level.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants are ready for harvest 50-60 days after planting.

NOTES

The leaves contain about 1.4% protein, 0.3% fat, 4.6% carbohydrate, 0.8% ash, some vitamin B1 and moderate levels of vitamin C

Root (Dry weight) Water: 0 Calories: 349 Protein: 18.6 Fat: 3.5 Carbohydrate: 70.9 Fibre: 9.3 Ash: Calcium: 640 Phosphorus: 477 Iron: 13 Sodium: 174 Potassium: 2233 Vitamin A: 7326 Thiamine: 0.69999 Riboflavin: 0.93 Niacin: 5.81 Vitamin C: 221. There are about 300-700 Allium species. Most species of Allium are edible (Flora of China). All alliums are edible but they may not all be worth eating!

They have also been put in the family Alliaceae.

It has 14.5 mg per 100 g dry weight and 7.5 mg fresh weight of alpha-tocopherol (Vitamin E).

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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