PLANT FACT SHEET

Zingiber officinale Roscoe

GENUS *Zingiber* **FAMILY** Zingiberaceae

COMMON NAMES Ginger

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Rhizome, Root, Leaves, Herb, Spice, Vegetable, Flowering stalk, Flowers

The underground rhizome is eaten raw or in salads.
The young shoots are spicy and can be eaten. These young shoots are eaten as a vegetable. They are also pickled.
The rhizome can be dried and powdered. These old roots are used as a spice. They are preserved in syrup.
Oil of ginger is used as a flavouring.
Ginger is used for drinks.
The inflorescence is eaten in soup.

DESCRIPTION

A perennial herb with swollen underground stems. It can grow 30-100 cm tall. The underground stem or rhizome branches and is horizontal near the soil surface. It is about 1.5-2.5 cm thick. Inside the rhizome is yellow and it is covered with scales forming a circle around it. The leaves are long (30 cm) and narrow (4 cm). Each leafy shoot usually has 8-12 leaves in two vertical lines on opposite sides of them. The leaf blade narrows evenly to the leaf tip. The flower is a cone 6 cm long on a stalk up to 30 cm long. (Flowers are not produced in all locations.)

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It is mainly grown from sea level up to 1900 m altitude in the tropics but will grow at higher places. It needs a loose fertile soil. It does best with plenty of humus. It requires a rainfall of 1500 mm or more per year. It does best where there is a short dry season and a good hot temperature. It cannot stand water-logging. In Nepal it grows to about 2500 m altitude. It suits hardiness zones 9-12. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

A portion of the rhizome is planted 5-7 cm below the surface of the soil. Sometimes light shade is used but it can be grown without shade.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It takes 12 months to mature. It is harvested several times. The young shoots are cut when about 7.5 cm high.

NOTES

There are about 100-150 Zingiber species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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