PLANT FACT SHEET

Tropaeolum tuberosum Ruiz & Pav.

GENUS *Tropaeolum* **FAMILY** Tropaeolaceae

COMMON NAMES Anu, Mashua

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Root, Tubers, Leaves, Flowers, Vegetable

Tubers are eaten after boiling for 10 minutes. They are often sweetened. They can be added to stews.
They are cured in the sun then freeze dried then boiled like potatoes.
They can be cooked then frozen.
The tender young leaves and flowers are also eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A climbing herb which climbs by twining around objects. It is grown each year from tubers. It can be 2-4 m high and spread 3 m wide. It does not have hairs. Stems are greenish red. Leaves have 5 lobes. Leaves vary between 5-20 cm long. Tubers are yellowish green with purple marks. They are often deeply furrowed. Flowers are red and yellow. They are 3-4 cm across and cup shaped with a long spur. The plant sets seed easily. Tuber colour and shape varies between varieties.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in high altitude, cool, moist, tropical regions. The plants are tolerant of frost. It requires 12 hour days for successful cultivation. It can grow on poor soils. In South America plants grow from 3,000 to 4,000 m altitude. It suits hardiness zones 8-10.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from tubers. A spacing of 70 cm x 70 cm is suitable. It needs to be kept weed free and to have the earth hilled up around plants. Plants mature in about 7 months. Because of its climbing pattern it can compete with weeds. Plants can also be grown from seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants mature in about 7 months. Tubers store satisfactorily. Tubers are often frozen or partially dried after harvest to improve the flavour. The average yield in Peru is about 4 to 12 tonnes per hectare. Yields of up to 70 tonnes per hectare are possible. The plant growing time is 220 to 240 days in Peru.

NOTES

It has benefits for other plants grown with it of controlling nematodes and insects.
The tubers probably reduce the production of testosterone. There are 80 to 90 Tropaeolum species.

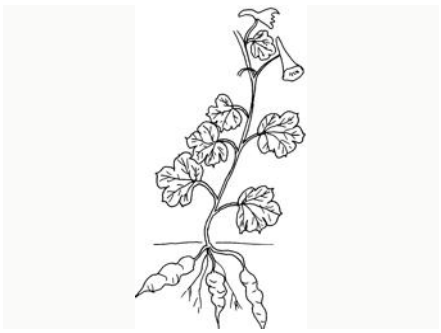
PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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