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.

Canavalia cathartica Thouars

GENUS *Canavalia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Jack bean, Maunaloa

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Pods, Fruit, Flowers

The young tender pods and seeds are cooked as a vegetable.
The mature pods are poisonous and must be boiled with several changes of water.
The flowers are eaten raw as a vegetable.
Caution: The pods and seeds become poisonous when ripe.

DESCRIPTION

A climbing herb. The vine is less than 2 cm across. The leaves are compound and alternate. The leaves have 3 leaflets. The leaflets are 4-24 cm long by 3-12 cm wide. The veins are easy to see on the upper surface. The leaf stalk is 2-12 cm long. The flowers are lilac. They occur in the axils of leaves. The fruit is a pod. It is often curved. It is 8-12.5 cm long by 3-4.5 cm wide. There are 3-5 ribs along one side. There are 2-6 seeds. They are dark reddish-brown and 18 mm long.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. In Nepal it grows from 1000-1400 m altitude. In tropical Australia it grows from 20-200 m altitude.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed.

NOTES

There are about 50 Canavalia species.

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