PLANT FACT SHEET

Blitum virgatum L.

GENUS *Blitum* **FAMILY** Amaranthaceae

COMMON NAMES Strawberry-fruited fat hen, Leafy goosefoot, Strawberry goosefoot

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds, Fruit, Flowers

The fruit have little flavour but can be used as a garnish on sweet or savoury dishes. They are eaten fresh. They are also boiled with milk.
The young leaves are usually lightly boiled then eaten. It is used as a pot-herb.

DESCRIPTION

An annual herb. It grows 20-70 cm tall. It often has several stems. It can be erect or sprawling. The leaves have irregular lobes and are almost triangle shaped. They are 7-10 cm long and have a pointed tip. The leaves are dark green above and are paler underneath. The flowers are small and 4 mm wide. They occur in clusters on the main stem. They are a greenish-yellow colour. Plants contain both sexes and they are pollinated by wind. The fruit are like berries. There are many small drupelets in a tight cluster. The fruit are bright red. They are 1-1.5 cm wide. The fruit can be juicy.

HABITAT

It is a cool temperate plant. It grows naturally in mountainous regions in Central and Southern Europe. It cannot tolerate frost but is grown as an annual. It needs full sun. They grow best in fertile soil. In the Indian Himalayas it grows between 1,200-2,300 m above sea level

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are usually grown from seed. Seeds can be broadcast and grow in 7-14 days. Seedlings can be transplanted. A spacing of 30-50 cm is suitable.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows easily.

NOTES

There are about 100-150-250 Chenopodium species. They are mostly in temperate regions.
Also put in the family Chenopodiaceae.

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