PLANT FACT SHEET

Zizania latifolia (Griseb.) Turcz. ex Stapf

GENUS *Zizania* **FAMILY** Poaceae

COMMON NAMES Water bamboo, Manchurian wild rice

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Root, Seeds, Stem, Cereal, Vegetable

The tender green shoots are sometimes used as a vegetable. They are shredded, sliced, boiled in soups or scalded and used in salads.
The rhizomes and grains are also eaten in times of scarcity. The seeds are used like rice.
The very young flowering stalk is cooked and eaten as a vegetable.
The swollen infected culms are eaten as a vegetable. The enlarged tender shoots infested with the smut fungus Ustilago esculenta are eaten. The cucumber like infested shoots are harvested before any black vein appears.

DESCRIPTION

A grass which grows in water. It keeps growing from year to year. It grows 1.2 m tall. It has stout rhizomes or underground stems buried in the mud. The internodes near the base are 6-8 cm long by 2 cm wide. The leaves are crowded towards the base of the plant. The leaf blade is 70-130 cm long by 2-3 cm wide. The stems become swollen as the result of infection by a smut fungus. They are like a stubby bamboo shoots. They are harvested before the black fungus spores develop.

HABITAT

It suits warm temperate places. It is damaged by frost. It grows in stagnant water along the edges of pools. It grows in wetlands. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is grown by dividing the clump.

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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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