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.

Cucumis africanus L. f.

GENUS *Cucumis* **FAMILY** Cucurbitaceae

COMMON NAMES Horned cucumber, Jelly melon

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Fruit, Seed, Vegetable

Young leaves are eaten as a potherb.
The bitter fruit are occasionally eaten raw. They are also cooked and strained.

DESCRIPTION

A pumpkin family herb. It keeps growing from year to year. It is a straggling plant with a rough surface. The leaves have 3-5 lobes. The middle lobe is largest. The tendrils are short and weak. The leaves are 8 cm long on stalks 7 cm long. The female flowers are yellow and 2 cm long. The male flowers are smaller and in clusters. The fruit are oval and 8 cm long by 4 cm across. They are yellow when ripe. The fruit are covered with stiff spines. Some fruit are bitter. Non bitter kinds have to be chosen.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in deep dry sandy soils. It grows in hot arid areas with a marked dry season. It grows between 150-2,115 m above sea level. It is not common in Swaziland. It can grow in arid places.

NOTES

There are about 25-30 Cucumis species.

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