PLANT FACT SHEET

Pueraria montana var. lobata (Willd.) Sanjappa & Pradeep

GENUS *Pueraria* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Kudzu, Japanese arrowroot

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Roots, Leaves, Flowers, Vegetable

The root tuber is cooked and eaten. A kind of flour can also be made from the roots. This is processed into a thickener for sauces.
The leaves, shoots and flowers can be used as a vegetable.
In India the seeds are boiled and kept in a closed container for about seven days and then allowed to decompose. A drink is made from it.

DESCRIPTION

A slow growing climbing legume with a thickened edible tuber. It has a thick stem which is hairy at the base. The stem can be 2.5 cm across. It can climb to 20 m high. The leaves are hairy and divided into 3 leaflets. They are oval or diamond shaped and they have lobes. The middle leaflet is the largest. The side leaflets are not equal on both sides of the main vein. The leaflets are 10-18 cm long by 8-15 cm wide. The leaves taper towards the tip. The leaf stalk is 20 cm long. The flowers are pea like and purple. They are 2 cm long and produced in upright stalks. The clusters along the stalks are 25-40 cm long. The fruit are oblong pods 9 cm long and 1 cm wide. They are covered with dense rusty hairs. The tuber is shaped like a cassava root. It can be 60-90 cm long.

HABITAT

A temperate to subtropical plant. Wild forms grow between 30 and 1860 m in the tropics. Cultivated forms are more common in high altitude areas up to 2700 m altitude in Papua New Guinea. It grows in grassland and on the edge of forests. It suits hardiness zones 5-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is normally grown by stem cuttings. It grows slowly. Plants also grow self sown from seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The time to maturity is 2-3 years. A tuberous root can be 35 kg weight.

NOTES

The tubers contain 27% starch. Chemical composition (peeled root): Protein = 2.13%. Fat = 0.1%. Carbohydrate = 27.1%. Ash = 1.45%.
Probably now Pueraria montana var lobata.
It has a chemical that reduces craving for alcohol.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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