

Potentially Important Leafy Greens and Vegetables in the Western Pacific

*Practical ways of
growing local food
plants and doing it
well*



**FOOD PLANT
SOLUTIONS**
ROTARIAN ACTION GROUP

*Solutions to Malnutrition
and Food Security*



www.twollamas.org.au

A project of the Rotary Club of Devonport North,
District 9830 and Food Plants International



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Two Llamas Environmental & Social Projects works with remote Indigenous communities throughout Oceania and Southeast Asia. We partnered with Food Plant Solutions to help improve nutritional intake by sharing knowledge, strengthening self-reliance and improving food security. For further information about our work, please reference: www.twollamas.org.au

For further details about the program please contact us at: info@foodplantsolutions.org or info@supwildernessadventures.com (Two Llamas Environmental & Social Projects)

In addition to this booklet, other publications have been produced for the Western Pacific. All can be downloaded from our website - www.foodplantsolutions.org

We encourage and welcome your support.



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*Practical ways of growing local food plants,
and doing it well*

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Fruit and Nuts in the Western Pacific

Good Gardening and Growing Root Crops in the Western Pacific

Western Pacific islands of beautiful leafy vegetables

Okra



Sweet fern



Ofenga



Bean leaves



Leafy greens - the health foods of the nation

Slippery cabbage



Amaranth



Sweet potato



Boabab



Using leafy greens

Collect and cook a mixture of leaves



Many edible leafy greens grow around houses and along roadsides.



Green leafy vegetables should be cooked.



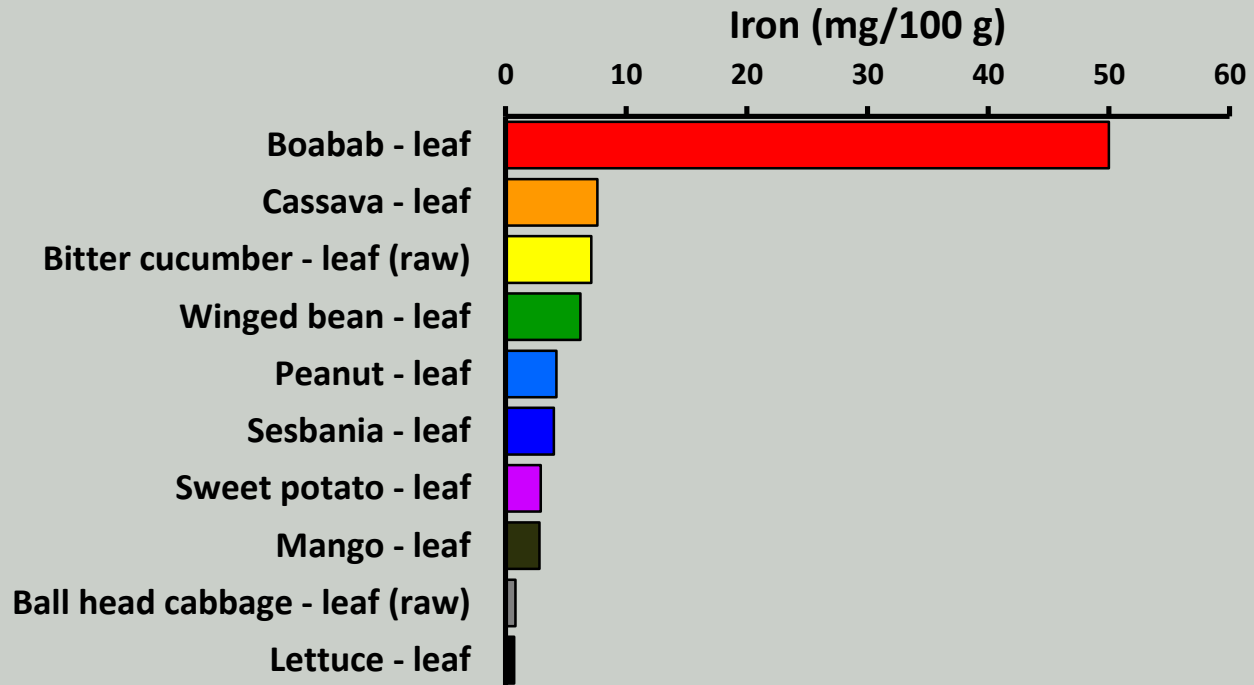
Healthy food



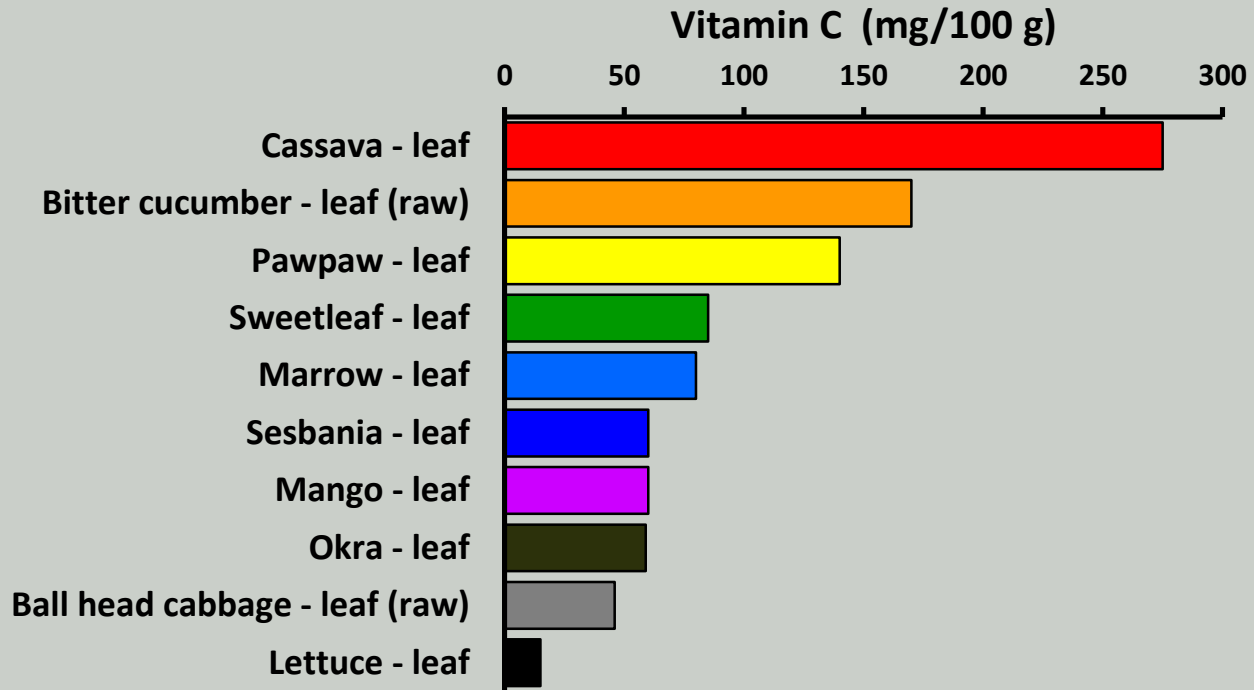
Healthy people eat leafy greens

- Many plants have edible leaves.
- Edible leaves are nutritious.
- Normally, all leaves should be cooked to kill bacteria.
- Everybody should eat a fish tin of dark green tropical leaves every day to stay healthy.
- Some leafy greens can be grown as hedges, in swamps, on coral soils and around houses to provide a regular daily supply of leafy vegetables.

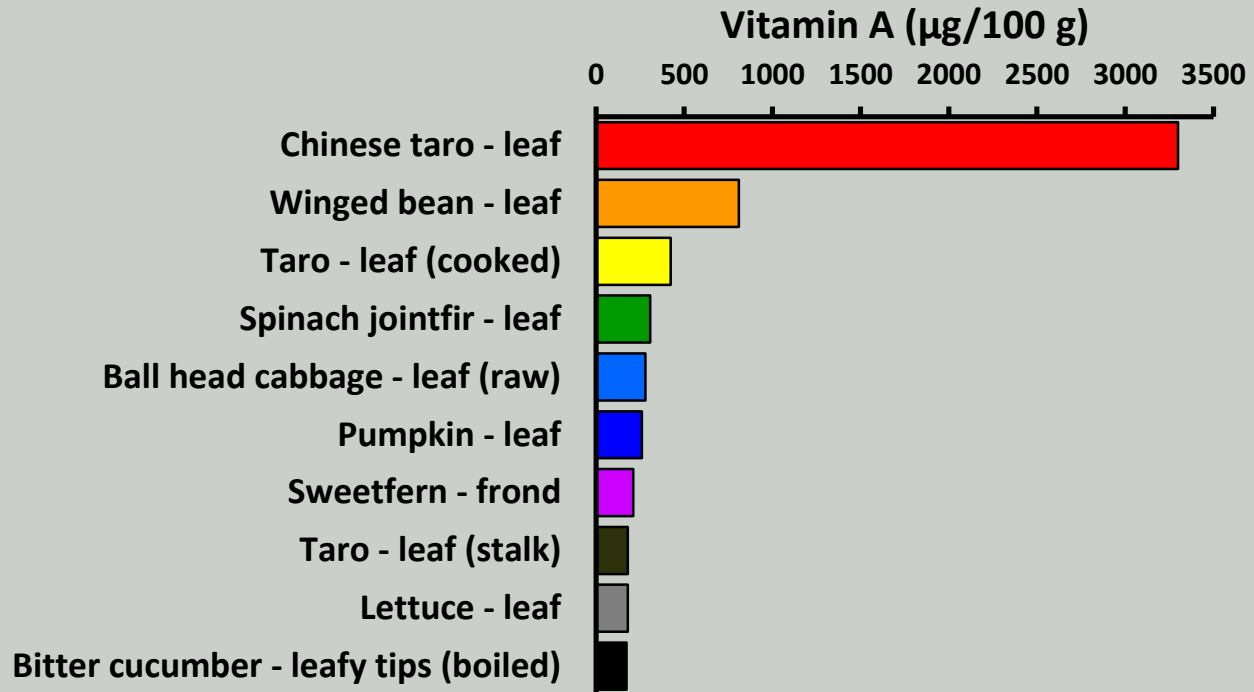
Green leafy vegetables - Iron content



Vitamin C for good health



Vitamin A value of leaves



Slippery cabbage - a delicious, highly nutritious leaf



Fry or
steam it to
avoid it
going slimy.



Abelmoschus manihot



Amaranth - a quick growing green

A home garden favourite



Scattering
seeds in old
fire ashes
helps plants
grow well.



Amaranthus spp



Chinese Taro



Xanthosoma sagittifolium



**A nutritious leaf that
grows easily.**



Swamp taro

Cyrtosperma merkusii



Swamp taro grows in fresh or brackish swamps.



Leaves and young flowers can be cooked and eaten.



Sweet potato leaf

Ground cover or climbing plant



Leaves are edible raw
or cooked.

Ipomoea batatas



Spinach jointfir



Gnetum gnemon

A sweet tender green.



Sweetleaf - a tasty leafy shrub

Popular in Asia and Western Pacific



Sauropus androgynus

Young leaves are eaten raw and older leaves are cooked. Fruit can be used for jam.



Pumpkin leaves

Best from locally selected tropical plants



Cucurbita maxima

Cassava



Manihot esculenta

Young leaves are edible
after cooking.



Sweet fern

Popular throughout Asia and the Pacific

Beautiful cooked in coconut milk.
It can be fried, steamed and used
in stews.

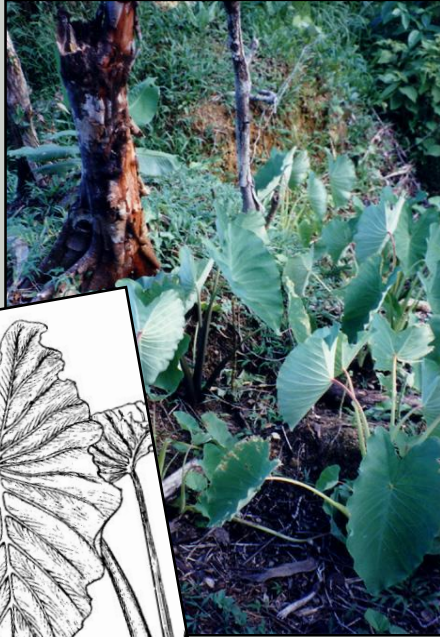


Diplazium esculentum

It grows in
damp
ground and
along banks
of streams.



Taro leaf - a good quality delicacy



Colocasia esculenta

Ofenga - a Malaita special



Pseuderanthemum whartonianum



Leafy greens of the Western Pacific

Dark green leaves
should be eaten daily.
They should be
cooked and can be
steamed, fried or
boiled.



Mango



Amaranth



Snake bean



Marrow



Slippery cabbage

Edible leaves



Okra



Slippery cabbage



Pumpkin



Taro



Swamp taro

Edible leaves



Edible leaves



Edible leaves



Edible leaves



Sweet potato



Chinese Taro



Sweetfern



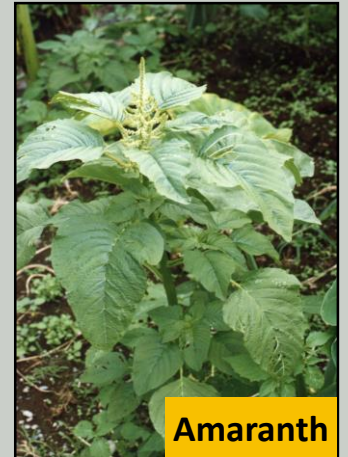
Watermelon



Ofenga



Winged bean



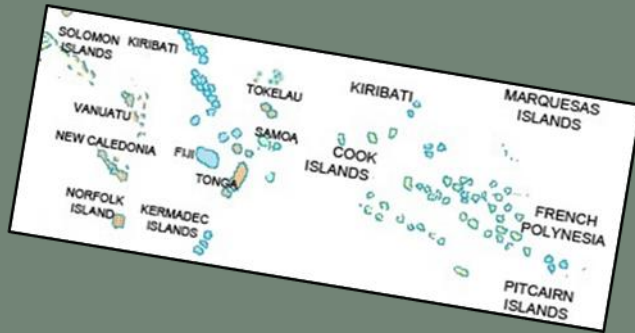
Amaranth

Plant poisons

Some foods contain substances that can cause illness. Check preparation methods before eating. Some examples are:

- **Bacteria on leaves can cause stomach upsets. Food should be cooked to kill bacteria.**
- **Cyanide is a poison commonly found in plants (e.g. cassava). It makes them bitter, but is destroyed when food is well cooked.**
- **Oxalates are common in plants (e.g. taro). They are sour and can burn the throat. Changing the water during cooking can reduce oxalates.**
- **Plants can accumulate nitrates that are poisonous to children. This happens when excess nitrogen fertilisers are added to some leafy vegetables (e.g. amaranth).**

The Western Pacific islands of great vegetable foods



Okra

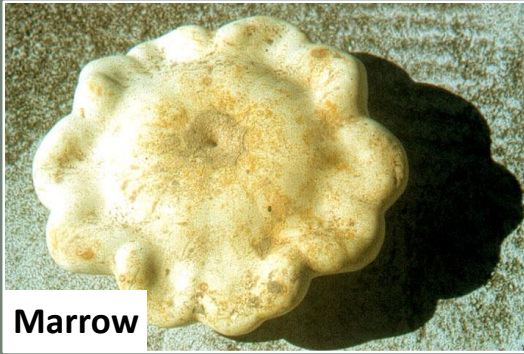


Bitter cucumber



Long pitpit

Vegetables for variety and nutrition



Marrow

As some vegetables only grow in certain seasons, families should plant a wide range to provide food all year.



Carrot

Some vegetables and edible leaves should be planted near houses so they are easily available, even on wet days, or when people can't get to distant gardens.



Pumpkin

Vegetables - nutritious and tasty



Long pitpit



Amaranth



Snake bean



Winged bean

Long pitpit - great in coconut milk



An attractive and
nutritious
seasonal food.

Saccharum edule



Okra - a tropical plant

Suited to the lowlands rather than the highlands



Abelmoschus esculentus



Young leaves, pods and seeds can be eaten. Leaves are edible cooked, like slippery cabbage. The pods can be eaten cooked or used to thicken soups.



Bitter cucumber - a spicy addition



Momordica charantia

The young, bitter fruit are used in soups and stews. The fruit is also a medicinal food that helps control virus diseases.



The young tender leaves can be cooked and eaten as flavouring.



Seeds are best soaked for 24 hours before planting. Plants need a trellis to climb over.

Pumpkin - edible leaves and fruit



Saving local seeds produces plants with less disease. Seeds are roasted and young leaves can be eaten.



Cucurbita maxima and
Cucurbita moschata



Winged bean - an amazing plant

Eat the leaves, flowers, pods, seeds and roots



Psophocarpus tetragonolobus



A very important plant that provides good quality food and improves the soil. Fattened roots often only develop in cooler locations.



Snake bean - a traditional bean



A popular climbing bean with leaves, pods, seeds and roots that can be cooked and eaten.

Vigna unguiculata subsp. sesquipedalis



Horse tamarind

Young pods can be boiled and eaten.



Leucaena leucocephala

Peanut – grows best in dry areas

Arachis hypogea



Seeds can
be eaten
raw or
cooked.



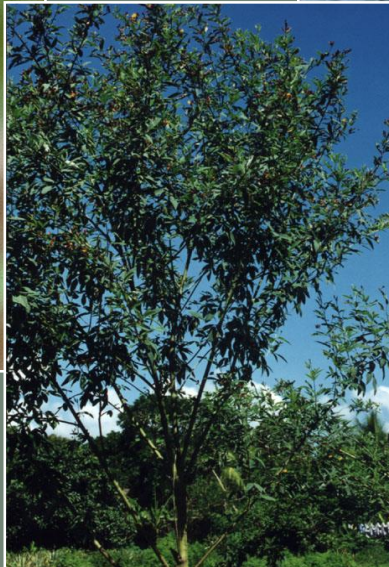
Pigeon pea - a shrub with edible seeds and leaves



Cajanus cajan



The leaves, pods, seeds and sprouts can all be cooked and eaten.



Pigeon pea has deep roots that recycle nutrients and help it to grow in drier places. Being a legume it puts nitrogen into the soil.

Banana buds - a special vegetable



Musa spp.



The male flower buds of several kinds of bananas are shredded and cooked and eaten. They contain some protein and iron.

Acknowledgements

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