

# GARLIC CHIVES

Chinese Chives, Chinese Leek

*Allium tuberosum*

Amaryllidaceae

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## ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

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### Description

Garlic Chives have mild, flat, tender leaves that taste like onion and garlic. Garlic Chives are a perennial, cool season vegetable, which flowers in the hot summer. They can tolerate high temperature and grow in many soil types.

### Origin

This member of the onion family originated in Southeast Asia and has spread successfully to Europe and North America.

### Uses

The primary use for this plant is in Asian cooking where the flat, green leaves and the immature flowers are eaten as a vegetable or as flavoring. The leaves contain sulfurous mustard oils that are believed to have antiseptic properties as well as the ability to stimulate the appetite. Partial control of bacterial wilt of tomato with Chinese chives has been reported.

### Common Names

- French
  - ciboulette ail ou ail chinois
  - ciboulette ail ou ail chinois
- Spanish
  - Cebollinos Chinos
  - Cebollinos De Ajo
  - Puerro Chino
  - Cebolletas Del Ajo

### Cultivation

Chinese Chives are grown easily from seed (4-5 months from seed to first cutting) or by division of the clumps of rhizomes, which needs to be done every 3-4 years. It is a perennial, cool season vegetable, which flowers, in the hot summer. It tolerates some high temperatures and a wide range of soils. In the first year of growth, the cutting of the leaves should be limited so that the rhizomes can build up strength. At this time, there should also be limited irrigation so that roots go deep. In the spring, soil should be added to the rows to keep the rhizomes from surfacing.

### Harvesting and Seed Production

Because it is a fast-growing and spreading plant, it can produce up to 8 cuttings/season in some countries. If the plants are then covered thickly with straw, plastic or earth, the second growth will have blanched, yellow leaves, a more subtle garlic flavor, softer bulbs and will bring a higher price on the commercial market. It is recommended that this technique only be used on alternative years for the health of the plants. The plant produces an attractive flower with star-shaped flowerets on a long stalk, which is sold as a cut flower. Seeds are easily separated after drying on the plant.

### Pests and Diseases

Resistance has been developed against several diseases and pests but onion thrips are the most severe problem worldwide with downy mildew and purple blotch occurring as well.

### Cooking and Nutrition

The taste of Chinese Chives is stronger than other chives. It gives food a garlic flavor. Blossoms stay crunchy when cooked but the leaves of those plants will be tougher because the flowers have been permitted to form and mature. Chinese Chives are commonly used to flavor Asian dishes or are stir-fried and served as a side dish with noodle soup. Cut chives will remain fresh for a week when stored in plastic in a chilled place or can be dried though intensity of flavor is lost.

### References

[WikiSpecies](#)

[Plants for a Future](#)

[Pl@ntUse](#)

[Food Plants International](#)

