

JOB'S TEARS

Coix lacryma-jobi

Gramineae

ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

Description

Botanically, Job's tears is described as an annual, erect grass, 1- 2 m tall, with maize-like brace roots that grow from the lower nodes. The grass is monoecious, having separate male and female flowers on different parts of the plant. The female flowers produce yellow, purple or brown seeds, often tearshaped (hence the name). Soft-shelled varieties are eaten (*Coix lacryma-jobi* var. *ma-yuen*) and hard-shelled varieties (*Coix lacryma-jobi* var. *stenocarpa* and var. *monilifer*) are often used as ornamental beads.

Uses

Job's tears is consumed as a grain by both humans and livestock. The grains steamed like rice and included in soups, beverages and desserts. The hard seeded varieties are used in beadwork.

Common Names

Cultivation

Job's tears is often found planted in stands or dispersed in and around upland fields. Plant seeds about 5 cm deep into prepared fields at the beginning of the rainy season. Hills should be spaced approximately 30 cm apart in rows 40-80 cm apart with a seed rate of 7-15 kg/ha.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The stalk begins to dry when most of the seeds are mature. After threshing and husking the grain (either manually or with the same tools used for rice), it is dried for storage. Under humid conditions, the grain does not store well, although the whole grain reportedly stores better than the husked grain (PROSEA, 1996).

References

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Van den Bergh, M.H. &N. Iamsupasit, 1996.*Coixlacryma-jobi*L. Record from Proseabase. Grubben, G.J.H.& Partohardjono, S. (Editors). PROSEA (Plant Resources of South-East Asia) Foundation, Bogor, Indonesi