

NEW ZEALAND SPINACH

Tetragonia, Warrigal Greens, Bower Spinach, Ispinaka

Tetragonia tetragonoides

Aizoaceae

ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

Description

New Zealand Spinach is native to New Zealand, Australia, Japan, China, and Taiwan. It is high in vitamin C and has been used to prevent scurvy. It grows well in the African highlands and other subtropical regions. Its growth habit is low and sprawling, reaching 30-40 cm in height and 100-125 cm in diameter.

Uses

It is used as a cooked green, and young leaves can be eaten raw in moderation.

Common Names

- Indonesian
 - Kabak

Cultivation

- **Elevation** - Not a significant factor
- **Rainfall** - 700 - 3000 mm/year
- **Soil Types** - Prefers well-drained soils with pH 5.5-8.6
- **Temperature Range** - 10° - 36° C
- **Day Length Sensitivity** - Not sensitive to day length
- **Light** - Prefers full sun

T. tetragonoides can survive long periods of drought and is salt tolerant. Seeds should be soaked in water for a day before planting. Direct seed every 30-50 cm in rows 100 cm apart. Initial growth is slow.

Harvesting and Seed Production

New shoots can be picked and tops trimmed 6-8 weeks after germination. The plants will spread, and frequent harvesting will extend the season. Seeds are hard-coated and can remain viable for several years if kept dry.

Pests and Diseases

NZ spinach has few disease and pest problems, but can be affected by leaf hopper, snails, aphids, and nematodes. Crop rotation usually controls pest problems.

Cooking and Nutrition

It is cooked as other green leafy vegetables. Similar to regular spinach, low rates of raw consumption are advisable in light of its high oxalate content.

References

Grubben, G.J.H., 2004. *Tetragonia tetragonoides* (Pall.) Kuntze. [Internet] Record from PROTA4U. Grubben, G.J.H. and O.A. Denton (Editors). PROTA (Plant Resources of Tropical Africa / Ressources végétales de l'Afrique tropicale), Wageningen, Netherlands

Ecocrop. 2007. *Tetragonia tetragonoides*. FAO, Rome, Italy