

# CILANTRO

Chinese Parsley, Dhania, Coriander (Seed)

*Coriandrum sativum*

Apiaceae (Umbellaceae)

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## ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

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### Origin

This herb used for flavoring is thought to have come from southern Europe or Asia Minor.

### Uses

This plant is valued for the seeds (Coriander) and its leaves (Cilantro or Chinese Parsley). Coriander seeds are used whole or ground in breads, cheeses, curry, sausages, and soups. Fresh Cilantro leaves are used in soups, stews, salads, stir-fry dishes and dips. The essential oils are used in perfumes, soaps and cosmetics. Cilantro has been used as a medicinal plant for over 5000 years in ancient Egypt, Rome and Greece.

### Cultivation

Considered a cool climate crop, Cilantro is planted early in the spring or late summer to mature in cool weather. It prefers rainfall of 15-31 cm (6-12 in). It will grow in higher elevations in the tropics with full sun and well-drained soil. It can grow in soil with pH of 4.9-8.3. Plant seeds in the spot where they will be grown for the season, 15-20 cm (8-9 in) apart, in full sun or partial shade. The plants go to seed quickly and have to be replanted often. The variety "Santro" is slow to go to seed, has dark green leaves and gives a high yield. Though principally a temperate climate plant, it is cultivated world wide in areas with daytime temperatures of 26-30° C (low 80's F) and nights above 15° C (60° F). The seeds of Cilantro, called Coriander, have a much different taste than the leaves.

### Harvesting and Seed Production

Young Cilantro leaves may be harvested at any time. If the stem is also cut back more leaves will form. Hot days plus hot nights make the plant set seeds earlier. Seeds are produced in 90-105 days after sowing and if ripened on the plant may tend to break out of the pods and be lost. It is better to pull the plant and hang it by its roots once the seeds are fully formed.

### Pests and Diseases

Fusarium wilt and powdery mildew are the chief diseases in the early season.

### Cooking and Nutrition

The Coriander seeds are used for breads, cheeses, sweet bread, sausages and curries. Fresh Cilantro leaves retain their flavor longer than dried leaves. Leaves are used in stir-fried dishes, garnishes, soups, fish dishes, guacamole and as garnish. The roots are popular in Thai cooking. The stems are used to flavor meat when smoking and the flowers can be eaten as well.

### References

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