

RUNNER BEAN

Scarlet Runner Bean, runner bean

Phaseolus coccineus

Fabaceae

ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

Description

Phaseolus coccineus is a perennial, vining legume from Central America. Due to its red showy flowers, *P. coccineus* is often grown as an ornamental, though nearly all parts of the plant are edible given the appropriate preparations. A climbing vine, *P. coccineus* reaches heights of 3-5 m and produces large scarlet inflorescences (each bearing around 20 flowers).

Uses

All parts of the plant—young stems, flowers, immature pods, seeds, and roots—are utilized for human consumption through various preparations. Young stems and immature pods are treated as a potherbs, boiled and/or stir fried in dishes. Flowers are often boiled or fried as an accompaniment to other dishes. *P. coccineus* roots are fibrous tubers, and are sliced, boiled, and eaten, or used as a medicine for various ailments. Seeds are treated as other common pulses, and contain similar antinutritive compounds that require sufficient boiling to remediate.

Common Names

- French
 - haricot d'espagne
- Spanish
 - Ayocote
 - caraota
 - frijol de flores
 - judía de España
 - poroto papa

Cultivation

- **Elevation** – 1400-2800 m
- **Rainfall** – 400-2600 mm
- **Soil Types** – well drained soils, pH 5.5-8
- **Temperature Range** – 5-30°C
- **Day Length Sensitivity** – variety dependent
- **Light** – full sun

P. coccineus should be planted 2.5-5 cm deep at a rate up to 75 kg/ha for vining types and 150 kg/ha for bush types. Suggested spacing is 100 cm between-row and 30 cm within-row. In areas of frost, planting time should be after the last frost date of the year. For best yields with vining varieties, support in the form of trellises or similar structures should be utilized.

Harvesting and Seed Production

For immature pod consumption, pods should be harvested before seed expansion. For seed harvest, plants should be cut and gathered when pods are mostly dry. Seeds can then be collected and dried further for storage.

Pests and Diseases

Anthraxnose and Fusarium wilt are common pathological concerns.

Cooking and Nutrition

Dried *P. coccineus* seeds should be cooked similar to other beans—soaking first before cooking. Beans should be cooked thoroughly to remove antinutritive components. Immature pods can be prepared as other green beans. Flowers are eaten raw, boiled, or fried.

References

Brink, M., 2006. *Phaseolus coccineus* L. Record from PROTA4U. Brink, M. & Belay, G. (Editors). PROTA (Plant Resources of Tropical Africa / Ressources végétales de l'Afrique tropicale), Wageningen, Netherlands. <http://www.prota4u.org/search.asp>. Accessed 11 June 2019.

Ecocrop. 1993-2007. *Phaseolus coccineus*. Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome, Italy. ecocrop.fao.org/ecocrop/srv/en/dataSheet?id=1665. Accessed 13 June 2019.

Stephens, J.M. 1994 (revised 2015). Bean, Scarlet Runner—*Phaseolus coccineus* L. University of Florida IFAS Extension.