

VEGETABLE AMARANTH

Brède De Malabar, Amarante Tricolor, slender amaranth, green amaranth

Amaranthus tricolor, *A. viridis*

Amaranthaceae

ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

Description

Amaranthus spp. is an annual, erect herb (up to 1 m tall) grown for its edible leaves. Leaves grow up to 8 cm in length and are present in an alternate arrangement along the stem. Small flowers are borne on slender spikes within inflorescences up to 12 cm long. Fruit are small, compressed, oval-shaped seeds (1 mm in diameter) and glossy black in color.

Uses

A. spp. is grown as a green vegetable. Leaves and young stems are prepared similar to other cooked leafy crops: boiled, sautéed, fried, added to soups, stews, or stir-frys. Seed production is minimal compared to biomass and is rather small. However, if harvested, seeds can be cooked similar to other amaranth pseudocereals: roasted, boiled, sprouted, or fermented. Plants are also used for livestock fodder.

Common Names

- French
 - amarante
 - amarante-feuille
- Spanish
 - Amaranto De Hortaliza
- Haitian Creole
 - Amarant Fey
- Swahili
 - Mchicha

Cultivation

- **Elevation** - up to 800 m
- **Rainfall** - 200-2700 mm
- **Soil Types** - pH 4.3-7.5; well-drained soils
- **Temperature Range** - 18-32°C
- **Day Length Sensitivity** - none
- **Light** - prefers full sun

Seeds can be broadcast in the field, or sown in a nursery for later transplanting of seedlings.. *A.* spp. also does well from cuttings of mature plants. Can be intercropped with maize or similar crops.

Harvesting and Seed Production

When ready to harvest, entire plants are uprooted as needed, or cut back and allowed to regrow. Leaves should be used as soon as possible, or stored in refrigeration. Seed heads can be hung in a controlled environment to dry.

Pests and Diseases

Pigweed mosaic virus is a common pest, resulting in decreased yields.

Cooking and Nutrition

A. spp. leaves are high in protein, calcium, potassium, and Vitamic C. They can be prepared boiled, sautéed, fried, or in soups, stews, or stir-frys.

References

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