

ALL ABOUT AMARANTH

IMPORTANCE

Amaranth, popularly known as “kulitis” or “uray na babae” is rich in Vitamin A and C, calcium, protein, iron and carbohydrates. It can be prepared as salad either green or blanched or cooked with other vegetables.

BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The edible amaranth (*A. tricolor* L. or *A. viridis* L.) is an annual leafy vegetable belonging to the *Amaranthaceae* or amaranth family.

Amaranthus- The plant is annual, erect, strongly branching up to 2.5 m tall, and with branched taproot. The leaves are alternate, with long petioles, simple and entire. Flowers are borne in axillary clusters; upper clusters are often leafless. Fruits are dry capsule, close or open. Seeds are shiny black or brown.

A. Tricolor- The plant is annual, erect, up to 1.5 m tall. Leaves are elliptical to lanceolate or broad-ovate, dark green, light green or red. Clusters of flowers are axillary, often spherical, with a reduced but occasionally well-developed terminal spike. The fruit is open, with a capsule-like lid. Seeds are black and relatively large (1200-2900 seeds/g).

A spiny relative of *kulitis* called *uray* (*A. spinosus* L.) is a common vegetable in some regions in the Philippines. Though spiny, it makes excellent greens or pot herbs when used in the same way as spinach.

HOW TO GROW

1. For home gardeners, slightly elevated plots are made.
2. The seeds can either be drilled or raised in seed boxes.
3. Plant the seedlings with a distance of 15-20 cm between rows and 15 cm between hills.

4. Water the plants after transplanting to encourage early recovery and prevent mortality.
5. Cultivate lightly to kill weeds and for the development of the green succulent and tender plants.
6. Minimal amount of inorganic fertilizer and compost can be applied at planting.

HARVESTING

Harvesting can be done when the plants are about 3-4 weeks old. Top cutting is recommended to promote lateral shoot growth increasing leaf production. Topping can be done 1 to 2 times a week.

Source: *Indigenous Vegetables of the Philippines*
Bureau of Plant Industry

BPI-LBNCRDPSC

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A recognized and leading Research, Development and Production Support Center for lowland vegetables.

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Generate crop farming technologies and produce quality seeds of lowland vegetables to ensure sustainable production.

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AMARANTH

Kulitis

(Amaranthus sp.)

