

IMPORTANCE AND CHARACTERISTICS

Ivy gourd is native to tropical Asia, where it is valued as vegetable. Young fruits are eaten either raw as a snack, in salads or pickles or cooked in soups and stews. The leaves are the most nutritious part of this plant it is a good source of Vitamin A, protein and other minerals and also contains phytochemicals.

It can tolerate dry periods of 3 to 5 months. Plants will not grow well at temperature below 68°F (20°C).

Sandy loam soils are preferred, but clay soils are suitable if well drained. It does not tolerate water-logged soils.

It is best propagated by cuttings, Propagation through seeds is quite difficult because it is dioecious, and almost 50% of the produced seeds are non-fruiting male.

HOW TO GROW

1. Plant cuttings in nursery containers, 5 to 8 cm) deep and place in a warm and sunny place. They must be kept moist but not soaked.
2. Cuttings will sprout within 2 to 3 weeks, when the vines reach 20 to 40 cm in length.
3. Transplanting is best done at the beginning of rainy season. Adding compost or green manure will provide needed nutrients for good establishment.
4. Plants spaced 40 to 75 cm, along a trellis will produce a rapid and dense stand.
5. Periodic application of compost is a good source of nutrients.
6. Weeds can be controlled by planting a living ground cover or by placing mulch on both sides of the trellis.
7. Harvesting the leaves shoots and fruits may take place daily.

PEST MANAGEMENT

Fruit fly is the common pest of ivy gourd, yellow leaf spots caused by fungus is the common disease. Use insecticides or fungicide if necessary.

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IVY GOURD

Tamleng

(*Coccinia grandis*)

