

Descriptions and care instructions for herbs

Ashwaganda (*Withania somniflora*)



Use: Increasingly popular herb known for strengthening physical and mental health, as anti-depressant and immune supporter.

Part used and how: Rhizomes are used dried as powder, in tea or in a capsule. Seeds are used in Ayurvedic medicine. Fresh rhizomes can be cooked in broths.

Origin: India, traditional Ayurvedic herb

Market: direct sale, herbalists, supplement industry

Growing: start seeds in deep plugs in March, barely cover seeds, and keep warm, transplant to larger deep pot if roots hit the bottom of the pot. Plant outside when about 2 inches high when soil is warming up (beginning May). Vulnerable to variety of pests while young, spray with spray with Spinosad, or cover from transplanting on with an insect barrier netting. Use ground cover to prevent weed growth, slow starter. Needs dry environment and well-draining soil for optimal strength of the roots. Water deeply but not often. Harvest late fall of first growing year. Use deep long spades or broad fork. Slice before drying.

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Balloon Flower (*Platycodon grandifloras*)



Use: this is a popular garden plant due to the beautiful flowers that can also be used as cut flowers. However, it is a medicinal plant in China and Korea and in Korea, the roots are used in several traditional dishes.

Parts used and how: It is not advised to use this plant medicinally without in depth knowledge. Grow it and use it for

its beauty and the interesting growth from balloon shape to star flower.

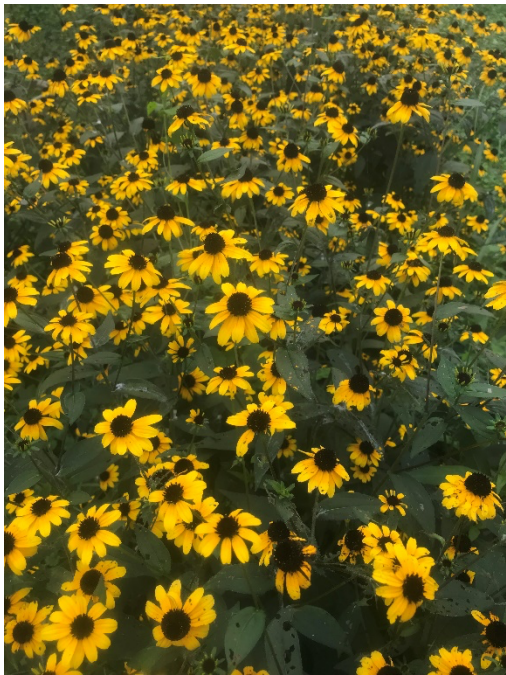
Origin: East Asia

Market: before growing this plant for the herb market, make sure your variety is the actual original Chinese or Korean variety used for medicine or food. The many cultivars on the market do not carry the same medicinal characteristics.

Growing: seeds can be planted directly on a weed free well-draining area in the fall to early spring, do not cover but press in, the seeds are light dependent. These seeds need a cold period. Very early spring planting in flats in a cold area and transferring in April to May is another, probably more successful strategy.

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Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)



Use: The state flower of Maryland. Currently mainly used for her happy appearance and as a pollinator plant for native bees and butterflies. In the past used as medicine for parasites and colds.

Part used and how: traditional only the roots were used for medicine. Currently some will use flowers and leaves as well.

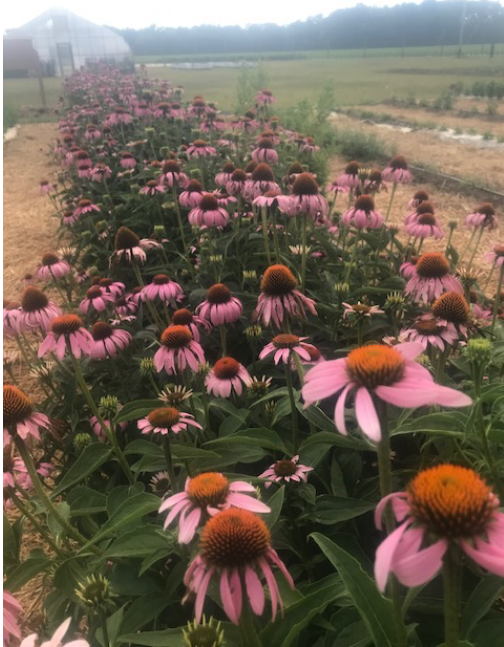
Origin: Eastern United States

Market: sell the plants at farmers market. No substantial market for dried or fresh parts.

Growing: this is a native plant to our area and requires moist well draining soil and part to full sun. Seeds can be direct seeded and grow faster than many other seeds; they can take over your wild flower area. No need to cover seed with soil, if possible press them in. Plant seeds in the fall or early spring. They can be seeded in a flat in a cold environment and transferred in the spring.

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Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)



Use: anti-inflammatory, used for colds, builds the immune system, used for viruses, animal bites and infections.

Part used and how: roots after 3rd growing season are preferred. Roots sold fresh or dried. Best used as a tincture, also used in teas. Flowers and leaves are used in teas.

Origin: Eastern US.

Market: herbalists, hobby herbalists, supplement industry

Growing: You can plant the seeds in the fall and keep them outside covered with leaves for protection of rain and snow. But you can also seed them in early spring in a cool protected area. Use deep plugs and transplant when the roots are getting close to the bottom of the plug / pot. Transplant outside early spring, 1.5-foot distance. Will spread and grow together. Division of roots is also used. Irrigate in the beginning phase, no irrigation needed under normal circumstances. If irrigation is needed, water deeply for long period.

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Garlic chives (*Allium tuberosum*)



Use: culinary herb, used globally, a staple herb in Iran. Stimulates appetite, blood circulation and said to be a diuretic.

Part used and how: the flat leaves are comparable to regular chives but have a garlic taste, can be used raw or cooked instead of garlic. Harvest ongoing starting midsummer. Seeds are used in Chinese medicine as digestive support.

Origin: China to Northern Africa

Market: Direct sales as culinary herb to a multicultural customer base. Seeds to Chinese herbalists.

Growing: Start in flats or pots in early spring with heat. Plant 3 seeds in one plug / pot with a planting depth the size of the seeds. Keep 3 seedlings in one plug and transplant the 3 together when they are about 3 inches high. Plant a foot apart. Slow growing perennial; protect from weeds in the first year. Will form a mat and flower in the second year. Will create a dense mat and spread beyond their area after the second year.

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Greek / Common Oregano (*Origanum hirtum* / *vulgare*)



Use: Oregano is both a culinary herb and a medicinal. It is used far beyond the Italian kitchen. Oregano essential oil is well known for its potential immune building effect. Oregano is finding its way in animal feed.

Part used and how: leaves are used, either fresh for cooking and for essential oil, dried for cooking and animal feed.

Origin: Mediterranean

Market: sell on farmers markets as any fresh culinary herb; local essential oil producers, supplement industry and chicken producers

Growing: starts seeds inside in early spring, do not cover with soil but press them in the soil, keep warm, transplant when 1 inch tall, water well in the beginning, then doesn't require much irrigation. Harvest before flowering. Two harvests starting second year.

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Saint John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)



Use: became popular for its anti-depressant effect. A traditional wound and burn healer when used as oil. Oil is red. Tincture / tea can help sleep and pain. Interacts with pharmaceuticals.

Part used and how: use the young flowers and top leaves. Best used fresh for infused oil and tincture. Used dried for tea.

Origin: Europe

Market: Herbalists, industry, home herbalists

Growing: the native variety is hard to establish. Seed them outside in weed free loose soil on several places. Or seed them in the fall in outside pots or seedling box. Saint John's Wort seed is light dependent: do not cover the seeds with soil. The cultivar Topaz can be seeded in flats (also do not cover) in a cool spot late summer, early fall or early spring and transplanted when about 2 inches high. The cultivar will grow in a variety of soil as long as there is drainage. No irrigation needed when established. Protect from weeds in the beginning growing phase. This perennial flowers in second year. Be aware, this will spread.

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Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*, *tenuiflorum*, *africanum*)



Use: spiritual plant in the Hindu religion; traditionally used for colds and sick feeling. Now used to lower blood sugar level; support energy and said to strengthen the immune system.

Part used and how: leaves for tea and medicine, roots for Hindu prayer beads. Used fresh or dried. Harvest leaves before fully in flower.

Origin: The area from Nepal to Iran, India most known for it. Also known to grow in the Northern part of the African continent. There are 4 different varieties, all natives to different areas. The variety temperate grows best in colder climates.

Growing: Start seeds in warm environment, keep moist but not wet, moisture is a delicate balance for Tulsi seedlings. They are very sensitive for too much moisture. Germination can be below 50%. Top and transfer to larger pots before transplanting outside when soil is warm, mid May, at 1 to 1.5 foot distance. Requires regular watering. Prevent weeds. Harvest regularly in beginning flowering stage to prevent setting seeds.

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