



Buckwheat

DID YOU KNOW?

Roasted buckwheat is called kasha. You can boil kasha until it is soft, and eat it as a cereal or add it to many main dishes.

Kasha is a basic food in Russia and Eastern Europe.



ORIGINS

Buckwheat is native to the Himalayas in southern China.

The Chinese were growing buckwheat over a thousand years ago.



CLASSIFYING BUCKWHEAT

FAMILY

Polygonaceae

(Buckwheat family)

In Greek, this means "many joints." The stems have many joints or swellings.



There are about 1,000 species in this family, which includes many edible plants.

GENUS

Fagopyrum

In Latin, this means "beech wheat." The fruit looks like the nut from a beech tree.



SPECIES

esculentum

In Latin, this means "edible."



THE BUCKWHEAT PLANT

The buckwheat plant grows to about one meter high.



The white flowers are at the ends of branched stems.

Leaves are shaped like triangles.



Fruits are shaped like little pyramids.

GROWING BUCKWHEAT

Plant in the spring or fall. Sprinkle about 1 tablespoon of seeds per square meter. Rake in and water.



In two weeks buckwheat will make a dense cover over the soil. I'll cut it when it flowers. It will rot quickly and add lots of organic matter to the soil.

USES

Buckwheat is a multipurpose crop. It makes a good cover crop, because it smothers weeds very well. You can feed it to animals. You can roast the fruit to make kasha, or grind it to make flour.



In Japan, noodles called "soba" are made from buckwheat flour.

NUTRIENT VALUE

Buckwheat contains plenty of protein, B vitamins, and minerals.

One cup of buckwheat flour has the same amount of...



...protein as 3 hot dogs



...potassium as 2 cups of milk

...calcium as 1/6 cup of milk

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