DID YOU KNOW?
People think yellow nutsedge is one of the world’s worst weeds. Yet in the United States, many poor farmers in Florida and Georgia used to grow yellow nutsedge to feed to hogs and cattle. The tubers also made tasty snacks for farm families during the winter.

ORIGINS
Yellow nutsedge, sometimes called chufa, is native to the Middle East. It was an important food crop in ancient Egypt.

CLASSIFYING YELLOW NUTSEDGE

FAMILY
In Latin, this means sedge.

SPECIE
In Latin, this means "edible." Both animals and humans can eat the very nutritious yellow nutsedge tubers.

GENUS
is closely related to papyrus which Egyptians make paper. The outside of the stem was removed, and the inside was sliced into strips to make paper.

Yellow nutsedge tubers have been found in vases in the tombs of ancient Egyptian pharaohs.

THE YELLOW NUTSEDGE PLANT
Yellow nutsedge is a perennial. Its tubers over-winter in the ground. When the weather becomes warm, the tubers send up shoots. The plant grows very well where the ground is wet.

- The plant is 20 to 90 cm (8 in to 3 ft) tall.
- The stem of a sedge has three sides while a grass stem is round.
- V-shaped leaves are bright green when young, but become pale green with age.
- The round tubers are ready to dig up when the seeds appear.

Today, yellow nutsedge is grown in West Africa, Spain, and China. The tubers can be boiled and then eaten as a vegetable. They can be ground and used to make a drink. They can also be toasted, ground, and used as flour. The tubers are high in fatty acids that can protect against heart disease. They are also high in iron and potassium.

FRIEND . . .
In the United States, yellow nutsedge is an important food source for deer, wild turkey, and waterfowl.

. . . OR FOE?
Yellow nutsedge can invade farm fields and gardens, especially where the soil is wet. It is very difficult to control.

A single plant can make several thousand tubers. Each tuber can sprout and grow into a new plant. Underground stems (rhizomes) can also sprout and grow into new plants.

Yellow nutsedge has really taken over here, because the soil was wet in the spring.
How Do You Grow Chufas?

In the summer, people who live in Valencia, Spain, often enjoy a refreshing drink called horchata de chufas. Since this drink is becoming more and more popular, farmers are growing more and more chufas—yellow nutsedge tubers. Scientists at the University of Valencia have been trying to find better ways to grow chufas.

In field trials, they found that chufas growing in sandy soils are larger and taste better. In clay soils, the tubers are smaller, get thicker skins, and do not taste as good. They also found that adding nitrogen fertilizer increases the growth of stems and leaves, but decreases the growth of tubers. Adding potassium and phosphorus fertilizer increases the growth of tubers.


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**Joke**

Who’s there?
A nut!
A nut who?
A nut sedge you’re a nut too! (It takes one to know one!)

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**Horchata de Chufa**

This refreshing summer drink is popular in Spain and Mexico. The nutsedge tubers can be harvested in the spring or fall.

Yield: 10-12 servings

**Ingredients**

* 2.2 lb (1 kg) chufas
* 2.2 lb (1 kg) sugar
* 5.3 quarts (5 l) water
* a cinnamon stick

**Instructions**

1. Wash the chufas well. Rinse in clean water and remove hairy fibers.
2. Soak in water for at least 14 hours.
3. Rinse the chufas again in clean water, until the water runs clear.
4. Put chufa in a blender and blend until it is a soft paste. Add a little water if necessary.
5. Add water to the paste. Place the cinnamon stick into the mixture, and stir.
6. Store in a cool place for 2 hours. Then add sugar and stir until dissolved.
7. Strain the mixture as many times as required until a fine, milky liquid remains. Horchata de Chufa will stay fresh in the fridge for about 4 days.