

Description

Chives *Allium Schoenoparasum* Family: Amaryllidaceae

Chives are from the Onion family and grow from of a clump of small bulbs each of which produce long hollow tubular leaves about 1-2mm in diameter straight from the bulb continuously throughout summer.

A rounded bunch of 10-30 soft purple flowers form at the top of a fibrous 25cm tall stalk, each with six petals, which develop a set of three small seeds each.

Growing Tips

This perennial herb likes well-drained rich, slightly acid soil and lots of sun with plenty of water. It grows from seed or by division.

Nip flowering heads before they open to ensure continuous leaf harvest.

Parts Used

Leaves

Uses

The leaves are used fresh, cut up finely and are a favourite in fish, egg dishes, in soups and salads. To preserve it, it is best frozen.

It is traditionally used as a companion plant as it repels most pests, but the flower attracts pollinating and predatory insects. The juice of the leaves can be mixed with water and used as a insecticidal spray.

They are a milder form of garlic therefore Chives is not used medicinally. It contains vitamin A and C, and similar to garlic, traces of sulfur, calcium and iron.

Origin & History

Chives are the only Onion species that is native to the Euro-Asian as well as the American continent.

It is the main herb added to the traditional Herring dish that is central to the midsummer festivities in Sweden.

It is also part of the French combination 'fines herbes'.

