



Helping People Help the Land

Learning About Asian Vegetables

Taro Leaves

Colocasia esulenta

Common Cooking Methods:

Taro is never served raw. Leaves may be boiled twice to remove acrid flavor. They are cooked similar to spinach, and roots are cooked similar to potatoes.

Health Benefits:

Taro is rich in vitamins A and C, fiber, and contains relatively high amounts of protein. The leaves have high levels of flavonoid anti-oxidants.

Fun Facts:

Taro has been cultivated for >6000 years! Though not toxic, it may cause a burning sensation to hands, mouth, and throat so handle it with gloves if you have sensitive skin. Taro can become invasive if left unmanaged and is considered an invasive in Florida.

USDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Taro Leaves *(continued)*

Other Common Names:

- Cocoyam
- Yu, yu tou (Chinese)
- Elephant's Ear
- Sato imo
- Dasheen, Eddo
- Kimo (Japanese)
- Arvi, parta

Plant Form:

- Perennial tropical/subtropical root, grown from tubers

Region Traditionally Used or Grown:

- India and Southeast Asia
- China
- Japan
- West Indies
- Polynesia
- Hawaii

Preferred Soil Type:

- Fertile
- Well-drained to moderately well drained
- pH 5.5 - 6.5

Suggested Sunlight:

- Does best in partial shade

Watering Requirements:

- Some forms are moisture or drought tolerant, so can be continually wet or in well drained soil if watered abundantly
- Keep tubers dry during dormant period if possible

Growing Tips:

- Taro requires ~200 frost-free days to reach maturity (USDA zones 9 – 11)
- If grown for leaves, it can be raised outdoors or in greenhouses as cool as 59°F
- Plant when soil has warmed in the spring
- Plant in rows 4 feet apart



www.ct.nrcs.usda.gov