



# Yard Long Bean

*Vigna unguiculata*

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# Classification

- Genus – *Vigna*
- Species – *unguiculata*
- Family – Leguminosae also known as the Fabaceae family, are a large family of flowering plants. And is the third largest land plant species on earth.
- Can be referred to as the Legume, or Bean family
- This family includes everyday foods such as peanuts, and beans, liquorice, peas, and chickpeas.



# Geographical Cultivation and Origin

- Original origin is uncertain but believed at first to be India, but now the best guess is from Central Africa.
- Today it is mostly cultivated in South Asia, and Southern China.
- It is rarely grown in Southeastern, and Lower Mid-western States in the US.

# Morphology

- It is a vigorously growing vine which grows in subtropical/tropical regions
- The pods ranges from 14 to 30 inches in length in approximately 60 days.
- The pods grow in pairs of two. Each having a thick decurved beak.
- Varieties are distinguished by the color of their matured seeds.
- Leaves are Trifoliate.
- Smooth, and lateral leaflets.
- Approximately 10-15 kidney shaped seeds per pod.

# Features of Cultivation

- For best results needs to be sown on well prepared seed bed.
- Prefers a slightly neutral pH
- Cultivated for its two pods, and seeds inside.
- Average seed yield is 750kg/hectare but can reach 2800kg/hectare.
- Studies show that 27 C is the optimum growing temperature.
- Easily susceptible to frost

# Plant Uses

- Mainly as food, The pod is best consumed when it is still a young plant.
- Used lots in West Indian, and Chinese dishes, mainly stir-fries.
- One serving (100g) contains 23% of your daily Vitamin C needs, and approximately 3g of Protein and 8.5g of Carbohydrates.
- Used as forage.
- Could not find any medicinal uses of the plant.

# Historical Facts

- ◉ Now believed that it originated from Central Africa.
- ◉ Brought across the Atlantic to the Caribbean.
- ◉ Earliest recorded use in the Americas was in 1685 in Jamaica, and 1700 in Florida.
- ◉ Originally known as “Poor mans food” in the southern United States.

# Use in North America and of Native Americans

- ◉ Its main use in North America is for food.
- ◉ Another big use is for forage.
- ◉ Easily found in the southern states of the US but not in the central, or northern states.
- ◉ No history of use by the Native Americans, as it is believed to be brought over from Africa.



# Interesting Facts

- ◉ Germination percentage from 70%-95%
- ◉ Commonly referred to as a Chinese Long bean, or a Cowpea.
- ◉ Actually only about half a yard long.

# References

- <http://www.fao.org/ag/agp/AGPC/doc/gbase/data/pf000090.htm>
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- <http://www.mygardeningnetwork.com/vegetable-gardening/facts-yard-long-beans>