

Edible Turmeric



This plant is most noted for its thick, branched rhizomes which are the source (after unearthing, boiling, drying and grinding) of the bright yellow-orange powdery spice known round the world as turmeric. It has a pungent somewhat bitter flavor. Turmeric has a number of well-known uses including culinary (ingredient in curry powder which contributes taste and distinctive yellow-orange color), medicinal (purportedly helps relieve pain, clean wounds, lower blood pressure, treat liver ailments and contain Alzheimer's disease) and dark yellow dye (food coloring and cosmetic dye which is sometimes considered to be a less expensive saffron-substitute). In addition, plant leaves are sometimes used for wrapping and cooking food. Plant flowers may be eaten as a vegetable.

Cucurma longa

- **Use:** The rhizomes are the source of a bright yellow-orange culinary spice. The bright yellow dye in the rhizomes is frequently used in food coloring, fabrics, and paints. It also has been used for medicinal purposes in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The plant is a member of the Zingiberaceae or ginger family. Common Turmeric is the main ingredient in curry powder.
- **Exposure/Soil:** They should be grown in well-drained soil in part sun. Prefers morning sun and afternoon shade Use slow release or water soluble fertilizer. Keep soil moist watering under leaves and flowers, but good drainage is a must!
- **Growth:** Tall, slender plants 3-4' tall and 3-4' wide.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 8-11 Perennial. In zone 7 bulbs may be dried and then replanted again in spring outdoors.
- **Foliage:** Deciduous. Canna-like, pleated, elliptic to lanceolate green leaves are 3.5' long. Plant will go dormant in winter whether indoors or outdoors.
- **Flower:** Short dense spikes of pale yellow flowers are produced in summer.

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