

# Plant Profile

**Name:** Egyptian Spinach



**Notes:** Native to the Middle East, this “food of the Pharaohs” is a common vegetable throughout the region, and a national dish of Egypt.

There are many methods of cooking, including a traditional soup called Molokhia which is often served over rice or with lamb, beef, or rabbit. It is also common in West African, India, and Southeast Asia.

**Sources:** <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/2012/sept/molokia.html>

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/molokhia/growing-egyptian-spinach.htm>

**When to Plant:** Spring, or when soil is warm, and no chance of frost. Optional: sow indoors 6-8 weeks before last frost date, then transplant outdoors.

**Common Name:** Egyptian Spinach  
**Alternate Names:** Molokhia, jute mallow, Jews' mallow  
**Botanical Name:** *Corchorus olitorius*

**Physical Description:** Bushy stage of jute plant. Simple, lance-shaped green leaves.

**Height:** grows up to 6 feet tall unpruned.

**Blooms:** late summer to early fall. Small yellow flowers grow into long, thin pods. Once pod dries, many dark teal seeds can be harvested and saved.

Annual  Biennial  Perennial

**Propagation:**  Seed  Cutting  Graft

**Other:** can be a perennial in hot climates zones 9-12

- **Soil:** well-draining,
- **Water:** keep moist, but not wet.
- **Sun:** Full sun
- **Zone/Temp:** Zone 9-11, frost sensitive
- **Spacing:** 2' – 3'

**Germination:** Easily germinates in warm, moist soil.

**Growing Season:** Early spring – late fall

**Days to Harvest:** Once the plant has reached about 2 feet in height, (**About 60 days**) the top 6-8 inches of young leaves can be harvested. Continue to harvest to encourage new growth.

**Care:** trim, Prune, other: Prune to keep desirable shape.

**Nutrients/Fertilizer:** Not necessary in rich, humus soil. Lightly fertilize if needed with a general garden fertilizer.

**Pests & Diseases:** Not known to be bothered by any pests or diseases.

**Companion Plants:** Plant 2-3 feet from other plants to allow full growth. Do not grow in shade.