

Amaranth

Amaranth Family - Amaranthaceae



Here we have planted golden amaranth (*Amaranthus hypochondriacus*). It is known for its display of flower heads that last for several months.

Ancient Aztec Grain

About 500 years ago, during the Aztec Empire, amaranth cultivation was most widespread. For the Aztecs, amaranth was a source of nutrition and had both therapeutic and ritual meaning.

Each plant produces 40,000 to 60,000 tiny seeds. The seeds can be popped like popcorn, boiled, sprouted, toasted, roasted, milled into flour, or even fermented to make beer!

The leaves are eaten as a vegetable, either boiled or fried, and the flowers are used to treat toothaches, or as a dye for food and festivities.

Did You Know?

This annual plant is not a “true” grain. Instead of producing a *caryopsis*, the typical fruit of a grain, amaranth produces a tiny fruit called a *utricle*, as shown below.



To learn more visit:
www.jeffersoninstitute.org
www.vandusengarden.org