

Quinoa

Spinach Family - Chenopodiaceae



Planted in front of you is *Chenopodium quinoa* 'Temuco'. This quinoa cultivar contains less saponins than other cultivars and grows well in the Pacific Northwest.

Garden Secret of the Incas

In the high Andes of South America, where little else grows, quinoa has been an important food crop for thousands of years. It is called the "mother grain" by the descendants of the Incas.

Like amaranth, quinoa is not a "true" grain. The one-seeded fruits are called *achenes* and are rich in protein and essential amino acids. Quinoa seeds are cooked like rice or milled into flour and are used in soups, cereals, breads and pastas.

The fruits are coated with bitter-tasting, natural soap compounds called *saponins*.

Saponins are somewhat toxic and help ward off hungry birds and insects. Before eating quinoa, soak, boil or mill the seeds to remove the saponins.

Saponins have many useful applications such as making soap, shampoo, bug repellent and the foam on root beer!



To learn more visit:
www.quinoa.net
www.vandusengarden.org