

FOOD PLANTS FOR HEALTHY DIETS IN ETHIOPIA



*PRACTICAL WAYS OF GROWING LOCAL
FOOD PLANTS AND DOING IT WELL*



FOOD PLANT SOLUTIONS
ROTARY ACTION GROUP
Solutions to Malnutrition and Food Security



A project of the Rotary Club of Devonport North,
District 9830 and Food Plants International



Food plants for healthy diets in Ethiopia

Rotary



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Nutrition 4 Education & Development (N4ED) is an Ethiopian nonprofit whose mission is to improve children's nutrition and ensure their full cognitive and physical development. The main activities of the organization focus is on giving parents the knowledge, the desire, the self-confidence, and the financial capacity to provide nutritious and balanced food for their children. That is done through nutrition and health education, saving and loan programs, business, life-skill, and technical training, affordable child care services and gardening.

One of N4ED's program is gardening. This program is key to transforming in practice the nutritional concept that the organization teaches to communities with theoretical and demonstration classes. Food Plant Solutions will support N4ED by providing the most appropriate informative resources regarding plants that are full of nutrients and that are easy to cultivate in Ethiopia's environment. This information is about different plants, and describes which part of the plant is edible, the nutrient value of each plant and well as other important information. N4ED will use these guides to implement its gardening projects and also to disseminate it among other stakeholders, the important information on Ethiopian endemic nutritious plants.

In addition to this booklet, other publications, which can be downloaded from our website (www.foodplantsolutions.org) have been created for Ethiopia.

For further details about the project please contact us at: info@foodplantsolutions.org

We welcome and encourage your support.



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Using food plant resources well



The health, well-being and food security of a nation requires making the best use of all available food plant resources.

Food plants for healthy diets in Ethiopia

With a rich, diverse climate and a variety of soils, altitudes, and rainfall patterns it is time to discover and explore the amazing range of frequently over-looked food plants that suit the locations, and are rich in nutrients.



Yeheb nut



Mandarin



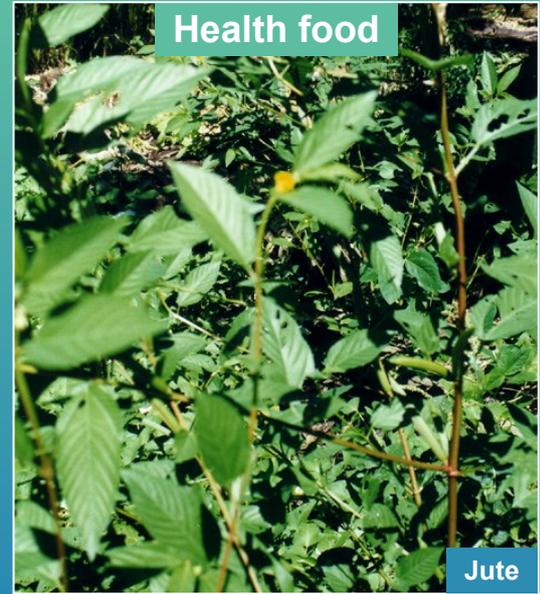
Garden cress

Healthy diets

To stay healthy all people, and especially children, should eat a wide range of food plants. This should include some plants from each of the food groups:

- Energy foods - e.g. sweet potato
- Growth foods - e.g. bottle gourd
- Health foods - e.g. jute

Then each of the nutrients required by our bodies will be met in a balanced manner.



Food security

Grow a range of different food plants, planted at different times throughout the year, so food doesn't become short in some seasons. This should include fruit and nut trees.



Moringa



Shepherd's purse



Japanese arrowroot



Sweet potato



Fat hen



Rice



Taro

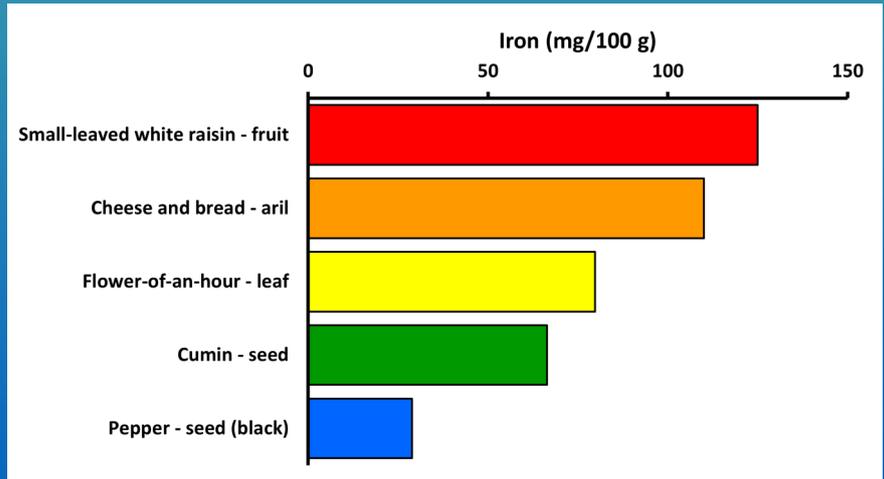
Iron for healthy blood

Iron is important in our blood. It is what makes our blood red.

Iron helps oxygen get to our lungs. This helps us to have energy to work.

When we are short of iron we are called anaemic. Iron is more available when Vitamin C is also present.

Soaking dried peas overnight before cooking them makes the iron more available.

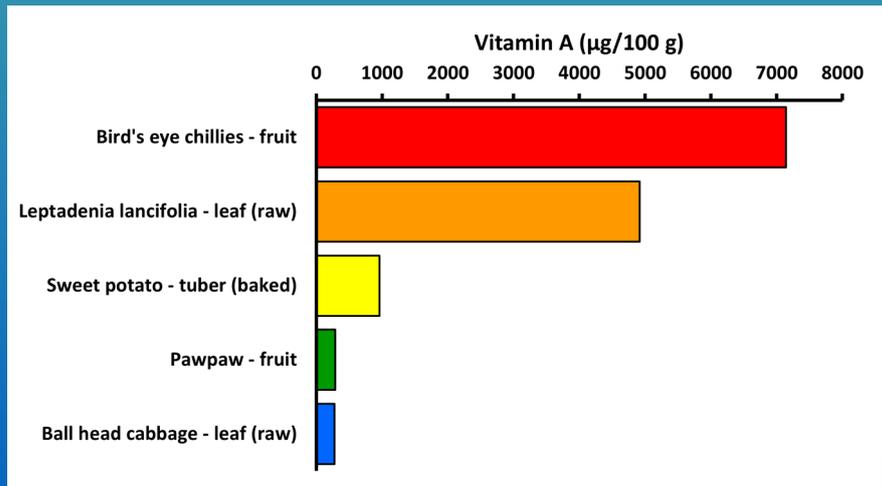
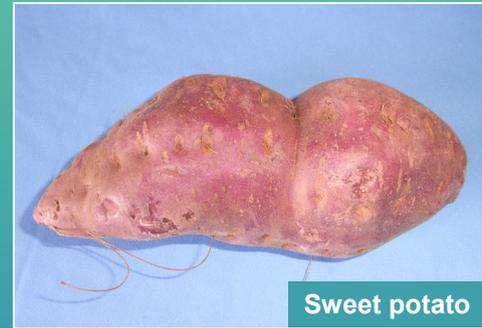


Vitamin A for good eyesight

Vitamin A is very important for eyesight and fighting disease, particularly in infants, young children and pregnant women.

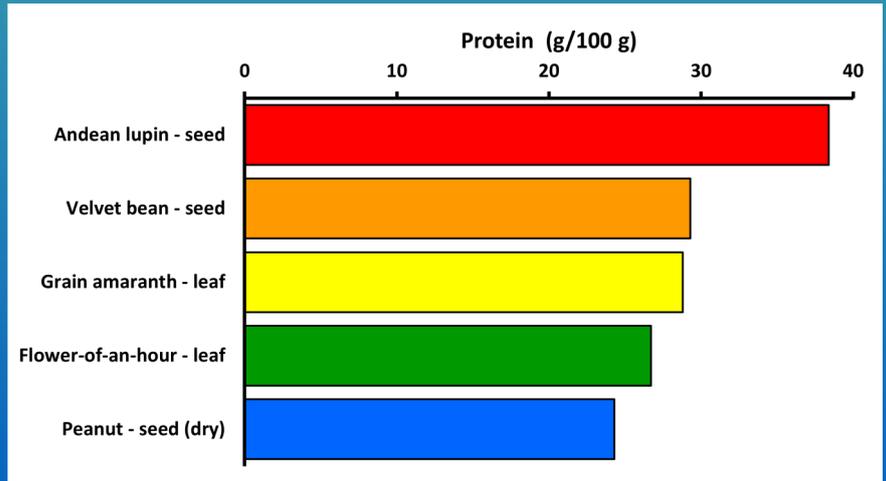
People who are short of Vitamin A have trouble seeing at night.

In plants, this chemical occurs in a form that has to be converted into Vitamin A in our bodies.



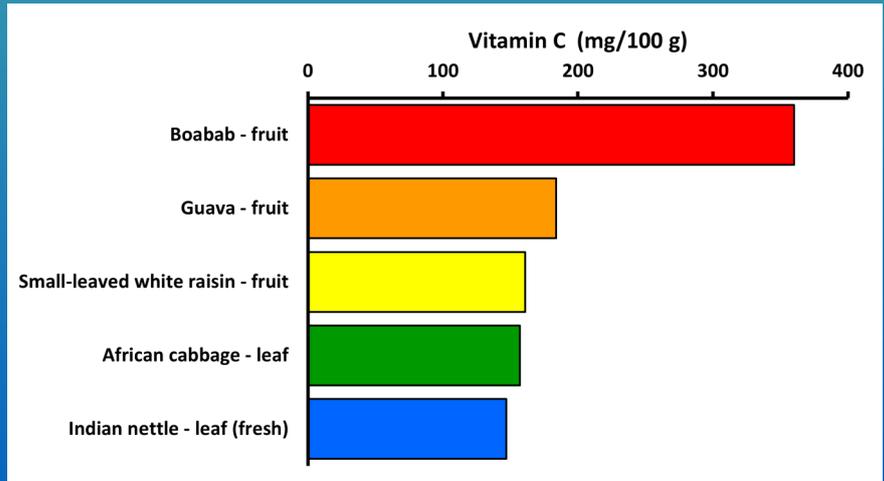
Protein foods

Food plants can be important sources of protein, particularly if fish and meat are not readily available.



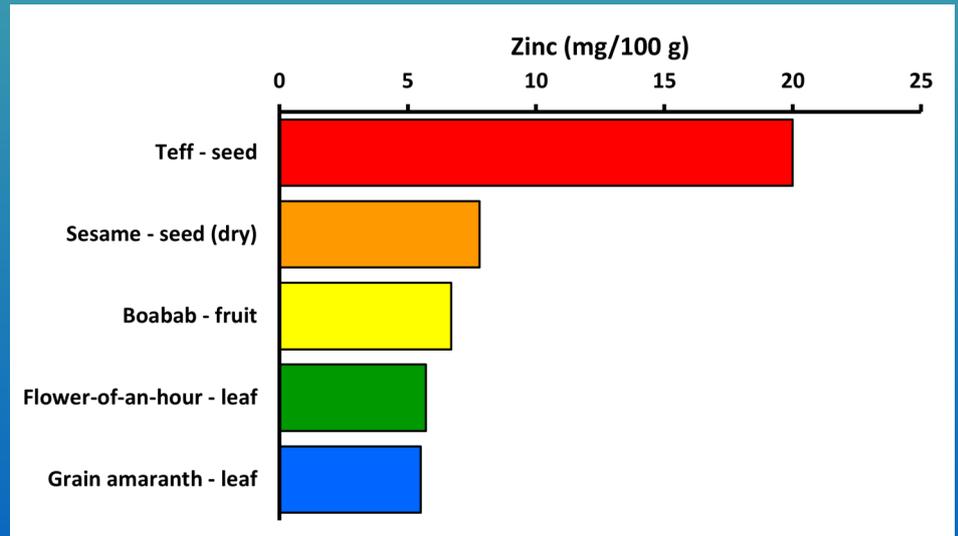
Vitamin C for good health

Vitamin C is important for helping us to avoid sickness.



Zinc for growing bodies

Zinc is particularly important for young children and teenagers to help recover from illness and be healthy.



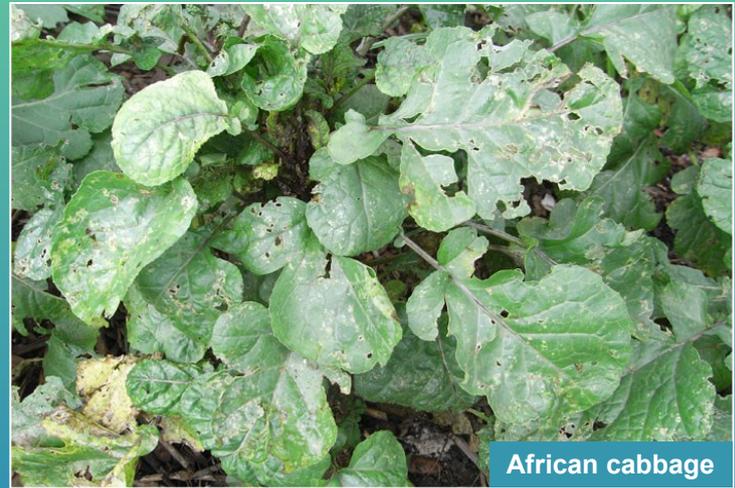
Leafy green foods are important

Dark green leaves are an important source of iron, protein and other vitamins and minerals essential for healthy diets.

Dark green leaves contain folate, which all women of child-bearing age need.

Low levels of folate at conception can lead to serious birth defects.

Everybody, especially women and children, should eat a hand full of leafy greens each day.



Root crops are perfect plants for hot humid tropical climates

Starchy staple foods are the lifeblood of Ethiopia.

We need to look out for pests, disease and signs that the plants are growing in poor soil.



Taro



Climbing asparagus



Sweet potato



Japanese arrowroot

Beans provide protein and restore soils

Beans have special bacteria attached to their roots that allow them to take nitrogen from the air and put it into the soil for plants to use.

It is free fertiliser!



Everyone should eat some fruit everyday

Fruit provide minerals and vitamins and other important nutrients that everybody needs to stay healthy and well.

Good farmers plant several kinds of fruit trees.



Gadda



Maroola plum



Guava

Fruit and nut trees for around houses

Fruit to be enjoyed by all.

Some need to be planted for the future.

Many fruit are seasonal. Some grow quickly.



Pawpaw



Guava



Yeheb nut



Mandarin

Vegetables for variety and nutrition

As some vegetables only grow in certain seasons, families should plant a wide range to provide food all year.

Some vegetables and edible leaves should be planted near houses so they are easily available even on wet days, or when people are too tired or busy to go to distant gardens.



Plants for garden edges



Flower-of-an-hour



Guava



Moringa



Short staple cotton

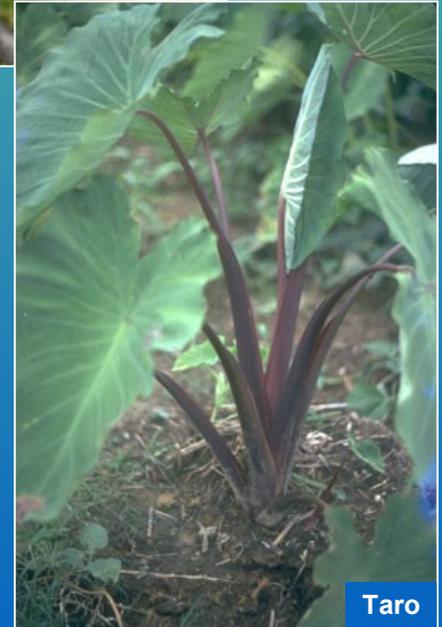
Plants for the edge of gardens

Larger plants can be grown around the edges of gardens.

Small leaved white raisin



Grain amaranth



Taro

Andean lupin



Plants for garden beds

Okra



Birdseye chilli



Sweet potato



Fat hen



Leptadenia lancifolia



Plants to climb on fences

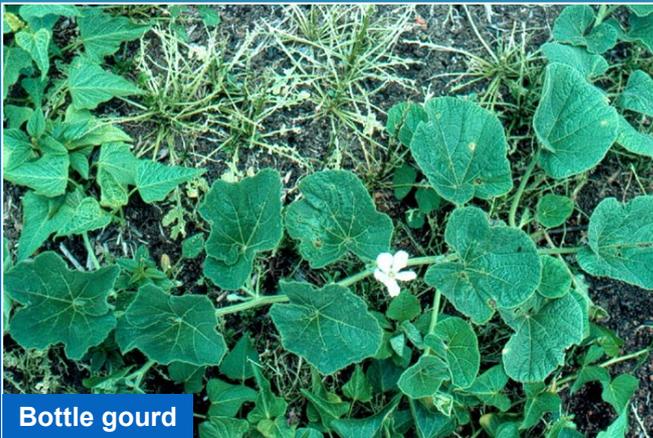
Many plants can be grown on fences around houses and gardens.



Velvet bean



African yam bean



Bottle gourd



Japanese arrowroot

Acknowledgements



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Notes



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