

FGCU Food Forest

Plant Database

Amaranth (*Amaranthus floridanus*)

Origin: Florida, North America.

Description: Native flowering plant that can grow between 1-1.5 meters in height and features edible leaves

Harvest: Year-round.

Flower: Late spring to fall.

Tolerance: Very drought tolerant; grows in wide variety of soils.



General Description: Amaranth, also known as “Florida Amaranth”, is a widely distributed Florida native with edible leaves and shoots. Although many *Amaranthus* species around the world are cultivated for their seeds, the Florida Amaranth is only grown for its edible leaves and shoots. *Amaranthus floridanus* can be found in gardens and in the wild in tropical and subtropical Florida.

- **Native Origin:** Tropical and subtropical Florida (United States of America).
- **General History:** The leaves and seeds of many Amaranth species have been eaten all around the world for thousands of years, including the native Florida *Amaranthus floridanus*, which has edible leaves and shoots, but non-edible seeds.
- **Distribution:** Tropics and subtropics in Florida, USA.
- **Season of Harvest:** Summer months.
- **Culinary Uses:** Leaves and young, tender shoots can be eaten raw in salads. Amaranth leaves are highly nutritious and contain three times more niacin and calcium than conventionally-grown spinach leaves. Amaranth leaves are a good source of vitamin C and B, calcium, iron, carotene, and protein. Younger leaves and shoots are very mild in flavor and are good raw in salads; however, older leaves should be cooked similar to spinach.

Amaranth

Scientific Classification

Kingdom: Plantae

(unranked): Angiosperms

(unranked): Eudicots

(unranked): Core eudicots

Order: Caryophyllales

Family: Amaranthaceae

Genus: Amaranthus

Species: ***A. floridanus***

Sources

<http://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/Plant.aspx?id=1235>

<http://www.tropicalpermaculture.com/amaranth-plant.html>

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mv006>

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