

November Plant of the Month

Brazilian Spinach

Sissoo Spinach/ Sambu/ Samba Lettuce/ Poor Man's Spinach





- Brazilian spinach is a low growing perennial leaf vegetable
- It forms a bush to 30 cm high
- The leaves are mid green, round and crinkled
- The flowers are small and white
- It is suitable for subtropical and tropical areas only
- It will tolerate most soils, although it prefers a moderate to rich loam. It dislikes waterlogging.
- It can be planted in full sun to medium shade.



Food

- It is a green leafy vegetable, without the slimy texture that people often dislike with aibika or Ceylon spinach.
- Fresh Brazilian spinach is firm and has a crunchy texture.
- You can use it in the same way you would use spinach or silverbeet.
- If eaten in large quantities, it requires steaming or boiling because of the presence of oxalates.
- Serving suggestions include: in salads with oil and or vinegar, tomato, and onion; added to quiches, pies, curries, dahl, pasta sauces, lasagna; added to dishes and stir-fries late in the cooking process as a spinach substitute and to add a nutty flavour

• Edging plant

Its growth habit makes it a handy plant for edging paths

Living mulch

 It can be planted as a living mulch under fruit trees



- Grows easily from cuttings. Propagate during spring
- Plant cuttings that are 15 20 cm long. Strip the leaves off the bottom half of the stems and bury a quarter or the length. Keep moist. When established, the cuttings shoot from the roots and quickly form dense clumps.
- Space 60 cm apart, mulch well.
- Brazilian spinach does not set viable seed and is not considered invasive.
- Plants are prone to leaf-eating caterpillar pests and slugs.
- Plucking the leaves downward encourages new leaves to shoot from the stem.
- The plant is cut back to the ground every year, refreshing the foliage.