

Jamaican Sorrel, Roselle, Flor de Jamaica (*Hibiscus Sabdariffa*)

Roselle is a fast growing annual hibiscus whose calyxes are used to make a delicious tea that is popular in the Caribbean, and other tropical areas. It gets to about six feet tall. The plant is high in calcium, and the calyxes are high in vitamin C and antioxidants.

Soil: Tolerant of most soil conditions, but strongly acidic soil should be limed up to mildly acidic. Needs very little to no fertilizer.

Water: Impressively drought tolerant.

Sun: Full sun to shade.

Cold: Will be damaged or killed by frost, and may be sickened by cold temperatures.

Pruning: None needed.

Propagation: Primarily by seed, cuttings may be effective. Plant seeds in pots in Feb/March. Take them inside on cold nights. Set in field after danger of frost is past.

Pests: Root knot nematode, scale, aphids, cotton stainer, mildew. Control for most of these have many complicated options that may vary in effectiveness. Over-fertilizing probably contributes to pest and disease problems.

Other problems: Falls over and breaks, especially in storms, over-fertilizing may contribute. Fruits ripen primarily in the winter, and are in danger of freezing. Flowers are sometimes not ejected from calyx, and rot inside it. Remove old flowers if they are not dropped.

Harvesting, storage, and preparation: Harvesting of young calyxes will encourage more flowering. This is usually done when they are about 1 inch in diameter. Clean and toss in hot water with slices of ginger root and brown sugar. It takes a lot to make a tea of decent strength. The tea is a traditional Christmas drink in the Caribbean, as the calyxes ripen at that time. They can also be dried for later use, as iced sorrel tea is heavenly on a hot summer day. The calyxes are also used in salads, syrups, jam, jellies, and chutneys. The leaves have a strong flavor that is used in Senegal to flavor the fish and rice dish "thieboudieune." In Myanmar, the dish "chin baung kyaw curry" is made from the leaves.

Jamaican Sorrel, Roselle, Flor de Jamaica (*Hibiscus Sabdariffa*)

Roselle is a fast growing annual hibiscus whose calyxes are used to make a delicious tea that is popular in the Caribbean, and other tropical areas. It gets to about six feet tall. The plant is high in calcium, and the calyxes are high in vitamin C and antioxidants.

Soil: Tolerant of most soil conditions, but strongly acidic soil should be limed up to mildly acidic. Needs very little to no fertilizer.

Water: Impressively drought tolerant.

Sun: Full sun to shade.

Cold: Will be damaged or killed by frost, and may be sickened by cold temperatures.

Pruning: None needed.

Propagation: Primarily by seed, cuttings may be effective. Plant seeds in pots in Feb/March. Take them inside on cold nights. Set in field after danger of frost is past.

Pests: Root knot nematode, scale, aphids, cotton stainer, mildew. Control for most of these have many complicated options that may vary in effectiveness. Over-fertilizing probably contributes to pest and disease problems.

Other problems: Falls over and breaks, especially in storms, over-fertilizing may contribute. Fruits ripen primarily in the winter, and are in danger of freezing. Flowers are sometimes not ejected from calyx, and rot inside it. Remove old flowers if they are not dropped.

Harvesting, storage, and preparation: Harvesting of young calyxes will encourage more flowering. This is usually done when they are about 1 inch in diameter. Clean and toss in hot water with slices of ginger root and brown sugar. It takes a lot to make a tea of decent strength. The tea is a traditional Christmas drink in the Caribbean, as the calyxes ripen at that time. They can also be dried for later use, as iced sorrel tea is heavenly on a hot summer day. The calyxes are also used in salads, syrups, jam, jellies, and chutneys. The leaves have a strong flavor that is used in Senegal to flavor the fish and rice dish "thieboudieune." In Myanmar, the dish "chin baung kyaw curry" is made from the leaves.