

CHINESE PARSLEY 香菜 (芫荽)

93-1-9

(*Coriandrum sativum*)

(Other names: Coriander, Yuan Sui, Cilantro)

Chinese parsley is known as coriander in the U.S. and is a very common herb in China. The plant looks like western parsley, so it is called Chinese parsley. Compared to its western counterpart, the fan-shaped leaves of Chinese parsley are flatter, a lighter shade of green, and more feathery. The young shoot has a very strong aromatic flavor. The mature plant is shorter, about 2 feet high, with a white flower, and the stalks are thinner.



HOW TO GROW: To speed seed germination, soak seeds overnight in water before planting. The Chinese parsley seeds are actually a seed pod which may be broken gently before planting. Each pod will split into two seeds, and each seed will grow into a plant. Sow seeds 1 foot apart in rows and plant seeds about a 1/2 inch deep. Seeds germinate in 8-12 days. Seeds may not be able to germinate in heavy clay soil. When plants are 3 inches tall thin to stand 1-2 inches apart. Young seedlings are edible. To ensure a continuous supply, plant several successive plantings at three-week intervals.

WHEN TO PLANT: Sow seeds in early spring, when frost is over, or in early fall. Chinese parsley is a cool crop. It will go to seed when grown in hot weather.

CARE AND HARVEST: Chinese parsley attracts no pests, and grows fast. Water when weather is dry. As vegetables, harvest may begin about 40 days after sowing; the plant takes about 60 days to mature. It is edible as soon as it appears above the ground. It is recommended that it be thinned several times for vegetable use as it grows. Harvest the entire plant before flower stems appear. If properly handled, it can be stored for two weeks. Put the base part of the fresh plants in a jar or other container of water; slip a plastic bag over the leaves and refrigerate.

VARIETIES: There are only two varieties, both taste similar.

1. **Green Petiole:** This is the more popular type of Chinese parsley. The leaves and the petioles are green in color.
2. **Red Petiole:** This variety has light red petioles. Hard to find on the market

USES: Both seeds and fresh shoots of the plants can be used as herbs. The seeds may be used as a condiment in potpourris, and in many delicious dishes. The leaves and young shoots are chiefly used for garnishing dishes of cold meats, but they may be cooked with meats, fried with fish, or chopped up and used in soups. Chinese parsley is also used for barbecued beef and smoked duck to provide an essential flavoring. The leaves can also be chopped and frozen, dried whole, or ground, like other leafy herbs.

RECIPES:

1. Thick Minced Beef & Coriander Soup

Ingredients;

1/2 lb	Beef, minced
3	Egg whites, lightly beaten
2 tablesp	Shredded ginger
2 pieces	Bunching onions, shred
2 tablesp	Chinese parsley, wash and cut into 1/2 inch lengths
5-6 cups	Water and chicken broth
2 tablesp	Corn starch

Procedures:

1. Season beef with salt, sugar, wine and soysauce for at least 15 minutes.
2. Bring water and chicken broth to a boil; add beef and simmer 10 minutes. Adjust seasoning.
3. Thicken soup with corn starch mixed to a paste with a little water.
4. Add egg whites to the soup while stirring vigorously with a fork in order to create fine shreds.
5. Place ginger, onions, and Chinese parsley in the bottom of a tureen or bowl, and pour hot soup over; serve.