

SWEET ANNIE



Artemisia annua

[ar-te-MIZ-ee-uh AN-yoo-uh]

Family: Compositae

Names: sweet wormwood; qing hao (Chinese); Annual Wormwood, Ch'Ou Hao, Huang Hua Hao, Kuso-Ninjin, Qing-guo, Sweet Sagewort, Ts'Ao Hao, Wormwood

Description: Fast-growing, giant annual with upright, often red stems and bright green, pinnately divided, saw-toothed leaves. Tiny yellow flowers appear in loose panicles in summer. Height of 5-10 feet and spread of 3-5 feet. It is hardy to zone 7. It is in flower from August to September. The scented flowers are hermaphrodite and are pollinated by insects.

Cultivation: An easily grown plant, succeeding in a well-drained circumneutral or slightly alkaline loamy soil, preferring a sunny position. Plants are longer lived, more hardy and more aromatic when they are grown in a poor dry soil. A fast-growing annual plant, it is tall but neat in habit with a handsome fragrant foliage and is useful for filling gaps at the back of a border. It has become a weed of waste places in many areas of the world. The plant is

extremely vigorous and essentially disease and pest free. Qing Hao is a determinate short-day plant. Non-juvenile plants are very responsive to photoperiodic stimulus and flower about two weeks after induction. The critical photoperiod seems to be about 13.5 hours, but there are likely to be photoperiod x temperature interactions. Members of this genus are rarely if ever troubled by browsing deer. Seed - sow spring in a cold frame and plant out in late spring or early summer. Alternatively, the seed can be sown late spring in situ. The leaves are harvested in the summer, before the plant comes into flower, and are dried for later use.

Properties: An aromatic, antibacterial herb that destroys malarial parasites, lowers fevers, and checks bleeding. Antiperiodic; Antiseptic; Carminative; Digestive.

Energetics: bitter, cold

Meridians/Organs affected: liver, gall bladder

Medicinal Uses: Qing Ho, better known in the West as sweet wormwood, is a traditional Chinese herbal medicine. An aromatic antibacterial plant, recent research has shown that it destroys malarial parasites, lowers fevers and checks bleeding. Also used for heat stroke. Used as an infusion. Externally the leaves are poulticed for nose bleeds, bleeding rashes, and sores. Research in Thailand and the US shows that *A. annua*, in the preparation Artesunate, is an effective antimalarial against drug-resistant strains of the disease. Clinical trials have shown it to be 90% effective and more successful than standard drugs. In a trial of 2000 patients, all were cured of the disease. The seeds are used in the treatment of flatulence, indigestion and night sweats. .

TCM:

Indications: summer colds, sweatless fevers, malaria, nocturnal sweats, heat excess. An excellent refrigerant remedy in ailments of “empty-hot” excess.

Other Uses: The plant is used in China as a medium for growing *Aspergillus* which is used in brewing wine. The plant yields 0.3% essential oil. This has an agreeable, refreshing and slightly balsamic odor and has been used in perfumery.

References:

Encyclopedia of Herbs and Their Uses
Plants for a Future Database

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