

SWEET FLAG (*Acorus calamus*)

- Sweet flag is slightly tonic but forms a useful adjunct to other tonics and stimulants.
- It is very popular for the remedies of cough and cold and also the other respiratory disorders like bronchitis.
- In raw form it is also used as cough lozenge.
- Sweet flag provides aid to the digestive system and acts against flatulent colic, dyspepsia, and vomiting.
- Sweet flag depresses central nervous system, and a well-known ingredient in formulation for psycho-somatic disorders like epilepsy.
- The vapours of sweet flag from the roots do repel some insects.

How to Grow

- Sweet flag grows well under seasonal shallow inundation.
- However, avoid flooding of newly established plants or seeded areas.
- Starter fertilizers may be used indoors to improve early growth but are unnecessary once transplanted outdoors into a rich soil.
- The spadix will turn brown as the seed ripens in late summer or early fall.
- Seed can be planted immediately or stored in low humidity refrigeration.
- The flowering head, produced from the side of the stalk, consists of a fleshy spike sometimes three and half inches long and about ½ inch in thickness, closely covered with very small, greenish yellow flowers, which appear from May to July.
- The rhizome should be gathered in early spring or in October and November.
- Dirt and bitter rootlets should be removed and the rhizome should be dried quickly in a warmed room.
- The leaves also possess the aromatic properties of the rhizome, but to a lesser extent and leaves are not important for medicinal property.

Harvest

- Rhizomes should be harvested for medicinal use in early spring before new growth, or late autumn. Collect when large and firm, generally after 2 to 3 years of growth, before becoming hollow.

Yield

- The crop produces 1-1.5 tons of dry rhizome per acre.

