

Did You Know?



Stevia *Stevia rebaudiana*

- Known to the Guarani Indians of Paraguay as “sweet herb” and has been used for centuries to sweeten bitter beverages.
- The Japanese have used this herb for decades to sweeten meat dishes, desserts, beverages and gum.
- Grows well in full sun with afternoon shade in hot climates and is hardy to zone 11.
- Prefers moist garden loam.
- The sweetness in the leaves is from glycoside molecules, primarily a compound identified and named stevioside in 1931.
- Stevioside is 100 to 300 times more sweet than sucrose and has no calories.
- Growing conditions as well as harvest storage and processing influence the amount of sweetness in a particular leaf.
- Stevia maintains it’s flavor even at high temperatures, so can be used in baking or cooking.
- Stevia can be purchased as a growing plant, powdered or cut and dried leaf, powdered or clear liquid extract or in tea bags.
- Named varieties include ‘Candy’, ‘Stevie’, ‘Sugarleaf’, ‘Honey Dip’ and ‘Crazy Sweet’.
- Harvest 4-6” stems before flowering and dry in bunches, hanging upside down or spread out screens.