

Caraway_1994.txt

CARAWAY =====

CULTIVATION: ===== Caraway is a biennial herb with an erect, slender, and branched stem. It grows to about 2 feet in height, bearing parsley like feathery leaves, and small white umbrella-like clusters of tiny white flowers.

Caraway needs full sun or light shade, and a rich soil. Sow seeds outside in late spring or in early autumn. Seed should be put in a shallow hole and in permanent position. Germination time is about 14 days, and plant matures in about 70 days. Grows in zone 3-10. Thin to 8 inches apart when large enough to handle. Caraway can be grown indoors so long as it is placed in a sunny position.

Gather leaves when young, and pick seed heads in late summer or when seeds are brown. Dig up roots during the second year. Dry seeds by hanging seed heads upside down over open container.

CULINARY USES: ===== Caraway seeds can be added to flavor soups, bread, cake, cookies, apple pie, baked apples, and cheese. Sprinkle over rich meats, pork, goose and Hungarian beef stew to aid the digestion.

Add seeds to cabbage water to reduce the cooking smell. Roots can be boiled as vegetable.

If you buying seeds in the store look for the dark seeds from northern Europe, especially from Holland, there said to be the best.

Chop young leaves into salads and soups, and roots can be cooked as a vegetable.

MEDICAL USES: ===== A pinch (about 1/2 teaspoon) of caraway seeds can help settle the stomach and relieve flatulence. Because it is

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the volatile oil in the seeds that give you the desired effect, eating the seeds themselves will give you the greater amount of the oil.

Researchers have discovered that two chemicals called Carvol and Carvene in caraway seeds sooth the smooth muscle tissue of the digestive tract and help expel gas.

Caraway is also a powerful appetite stimulant and a standard infusion can be drunk half an hour before a meal.

For a pleasant-tasting infusion that might help aid digestion, relieve gas or menstrual cramping, use 2-3 teaspoon of bruised or crushed seeds per cup of boiling water. Steep for 10-20 minutes, and drink up to 3 cups a day. Caraway appears to have antispasmodic properties and might relax the uterus. Pregnant woman should exercise caution and not use the herb medicinally.

WARNING: ===== Pregnant woman should exercise caution and not use the herb medicinally.

OTHER USES: ===== Planted in your garden, it will attract bees. Use well dried lemon balm in potpourris and pillows. It is used frequently in French liqueurs.

COSMETIC USES: ===== When crushed, the leaves smell and taste like lemon, and from them is produced a volatile oil used in perfumes and cosmetics.

Lemon balm can be used for an aromatic and stimulating bath, or to condition greasy hair. Tie 1/4 cup of crushed balm leaves into a bag. Let the water run through the bag until the tub is filled.

HERBAL BATH INFUSION : Infuse 10 ounces of the dried herb, or a handful of fresh herbs to 2 1/2 cups of boiling water. Leave for 10 minutes, then strain and pour into the tub.