



Sweetleaf
Stevia rebaudiana

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ○ ●

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Sweet Leaf, Sugarleaf, Honey Leaf, Sweet Herb

Description:

Not Winter Hardy, spindly, and many branched plant producing small clusters of tubular white flowers nearly year round; the leaves are not aromatic but possess a natural sweetness when tasted; water frequently when plants are young

Edible Qualities

Sweetleaf is an annual herb that is commonly grown for its edible qualities. It produces which can be harvested at any point. The have a pleasant taste.

The are most often used in the following ways:

- Baking
- Tea

Planting & Growing

Sweetleaf will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. It tends to be leggy, with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and should be underplanted with lower-growing perennials. Although it's not a true annual, this plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.



Sweetleaf foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Sweetleaf flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



This plant is typically grown in a designated herb garden. It does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for poor, acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division.

Sweetleaf is a good choice for the edible garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.