絲瓜 *Luffa acutangula*

Silky Gourd

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絲瓜，又名菜瓜，屬於葫蘆科一年生植物，原產於南洋，後來引種到中國、台灣等地。早期的生長速度較節瓜、青瓜緩慢，但後期枝葉非常茂盛，需較多的成長空間。絲瓜的盛產期由五月到九月。

Silky gourd or vegetable sponge which belongs to Luffa acutangula annual plant, originates in Southeast Asia and later ntroduced to China and Taiwan. It grows slower than hairy gourd and cucumber at an early stage but the foliage is very rich later. Thus, it needs more room for growth. The harvest period of silky gourd is from May to September.

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營養價值

絲瓜含有豐富的蛋白質、碳水化合物、維他命A、C、磷、鈣及鐵等。其蛋白質含量比冬瓜和黃瓜高二至三倍。絲瓜還含有皂苷、絲瓜苦味素、多量的黏液、瓜胺酸、脂肪等。這些營養元素對身體的生理活動十分重要。

Nutritional Value

Silky gourd is rich in protein, carbohydrates, vitamin A, C, phosphorus, calcium and iron. Its protein content is more than that of wax gourd and yellow gourd. Silky gourd also contains saponins, bitter gourd factors, large amounts of mucus citrulline and fat. These nutrients are important to the body.

烹調小貼士

絲瓜炒熟後菜汁會變黑，預防的方法是不要煮太久，且在撈起時才放鹽，就可避免變黑。

Cooking Tips

After cooked, the juice will become black. It is suggested not to cook too long and add salt after picked up. This could prevent blackening.
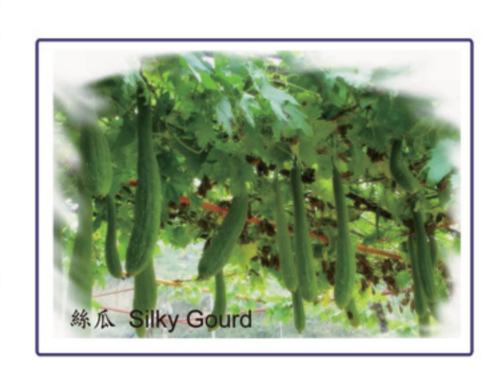
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食物功效

絲瓜肉具有清利腸、涼血、解毒、通經、行血脈、生津止渴、化痰、解暑除煩、通利腸胃、利尿消腫的功效。絲瓜對體質燥熱、便秘人也有幫助。絲瓜也可外用，對痘瘡具消腫止痛功效。

Health Benefit

Silky gourd can help clean intestines, cool blood, prevent sputum formation, relieve thrist. It also helps detoxification and preventing constipation. Silky gourd can be used externally, relieving pain and swelling of smallpox and acne.

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選購與保存

選購絲瓜時，以形體正直、果實完整、不損傷、果皮淺綠、瓜紋明者為佳。用保鮮袋裝好放在雪櫃冷藏，可保存一至兩天。絲瓜宜即切即做，避免營養隨水分流失。

Purchase and Preservation

When purchasing silky gourds, choose ones with intact fruit, light green rind with clear pattern and without damage. They could be stored in fridge for one to two days and consumed as soon as possible after sliced.

絲瓜的品種

日常所見的絲瓜幼幼長長，右邊的品種則較肥大多肉。它亦是絲瓜的一種。

Different Types of Silky Gourd

There are two types of silky gourds. The thin and long silky gourds are commonly seen. Another type is more spongy which is shown on the right.