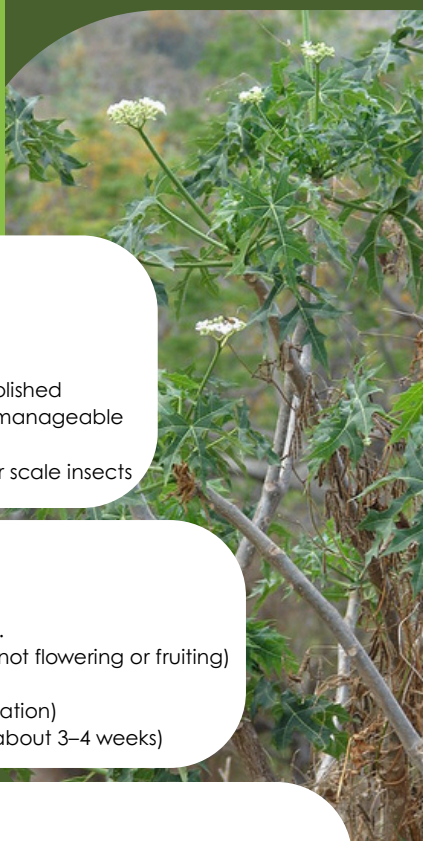


# Chaya

(*Chidocolus aconitifolius*)

A nutritional powerhouse—  
rich in protein, iron, calcium, & vitamin A.



## GROW

- **Size:** 6–10 ft tall × 4–6 ft wide (can plant as close as 3')
- **Light:** Full sun, tolerant of partial shade
- **Soil:** Well-drained, fertile soil with compost
- **Water:** Low to moderate—drought tolerant once established
- **Maintenance:** Prune regularly to harvest and keep at manageable size
- **Pests:** Generally pest-resistant; may attract whiteflies or scale insects

## PROPAGATE

Chaya is best propagated by cuttings (NOT seeds).

Can be planted directly in ground, with regular watering.

- **Cut:** Use a clean pruner to snip a 12–18 inch branch (not flowering or fruiting)
- **Dry:** Let cuttings dry in shade for 1–3 days
- **Plant:** Stick ½ of the stem into moist soil (vertical orientation)
- **Water:** Keep soil moist but not soggy until roots form (about 3–4 weeks)

## HARVEST

- Pick young leaves regularly after plant reaches 3–4' tall
- **Can harvest every 1–2 weeks**
- Encourage bushy growth by cutting top branches

## EAT

**Must be cooked before eating.\*\*\***

- **Boil for 15–20 minutes and discard the cooking water.\*\*\* Can be used in**
  - Soups and stews
  - Stir-fries
  - Tamales or pupusas de Chaya
- **Benefits:**
  - Promotes blood circulation
  - Supports digestive & immune health

**\*\*\* This removes hydrogen cyanide (HCN), a natural toxin found in many edible plants.** Some cultivars contain higher levels, and undercooked leaves can pose a risk—especially to children—but adequate boiling makes chaya very safe and highly nutritious.

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