

Smallage—*Apium graveolens* L.¹

James M. Stephens²

Smallage is the common name for a type of celery that produces seeds used as a condiment. The variety is a wild form found in Europe. The celery seed is a dried fruit from this biennial plant. Wild celery is reported to have been found as woven garlands in early Egyptian tombs.

Description

Strains of celery are grown for seed production in the western portion of the United States. Such forms are similar to culinary strains, being 2–3 feet high and having clusters of small white flowers. The very small seeds are produced in the second year. There are about 750,000 seeds per pound.

Culture

Celery grown for the stalk is an important commercial crop in Florida, but it is difficult to grow in gardens because of the high moisture requirements. Therefore, it is doubtful that smallage would produce satisfactory yields of seeds in Florida gardens. In small plot trials in north Florida, smallage grew poorly and did not produce seeds.

Use

Celery seeds are generally available as whole seeds or as celery salt, which is a combination of ground celery seed and fine table salt.



Figure 1. Smallage
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