

Piper nigrum



Common Name: Black Pepper

Scientific Name: *Piper nigrum*

Family: Piperaceae

Black pepper is often described as the 'king of spices' and it shares a place on most dinner tables with salt. The United States is the largest importer of pepper. India is still the largest exporter of spice, and Brazil may be among the newest exporter of pepper.

It is an evergreen, perennial climbing shrub that grows to about 9m tall through a system of aerial roots, but is usually pruned to 3.66m in cultivation. Its flowers are slender dense spikes with about 50 blossoms each. The berry-like fruits it produces become peppercorns, each one is about 5 mm in diameter and contains a single seed.

Economically Important Part: Fully mature unripe dried fruits are Black pepper while ripe berries are steamed then dried to get white pepper. Green pepper is a tender green spike of unripe fruits. Used as pickles. A mixture of black and white peppercorns is called a mignonette.

Economic Importance: Medicinally in Malaria and also credited for relieving arthritis, nausea, fever, migraine headaches, poor digestions, strep throat. Essential preservative of meat or perishable food. Flavouring agent. Essential ingredients of many food items. In some parts of the world, it is used as a moth killer and insect repellent.