

Caracteristiques

Botanical name: *Oryza sativa* **Black Madras**

English common names: Asian rice **Black Madras**, common rice **Black Madras**, cultivated rice **Black Madras**.

Family : Poacées (Grasses).

Origin of the species: humid tropical regions of Asia. At first, wild Asian rice was domesticated independently, in southern China, India and Indonesia.

Type: Semi-aquatic annual grass.

Port : Upright.

Growth: This plant grows faster in a hot and humid climate.

Height: 40 cm

With: 36 to 45 cm. Tillering, formed by adventitious roots, begins about two weeks after sowing.

Stem : The stem is branched and purple in colour.

Foliage: The leaves are purple. They may be slightly green when emerging, but quickly turn purple.

Floraion: Spikelets slightly arched. Heading occurs in September.

Harvest: When the ear has reached ¾ of its maturity. It is then slightly yellowish. If the climatic conditions are favourable, the ripening process occurs 20 to 40 days after the start of flowering.

Soil: This plant can be grown in a wide variety of water and soil conditions. Although it needs a lot of water and heat, it grows well in our temperate regions, in a substrate that retains water wells or in pure compost.

Clay soils are therefore a good choice for growing this plant. Placed in 5 cm of water, a pot of 'Black Madras' Asian rice looks great all summer long.

This rice also gives good results whether the soil is saline, alkaline or acidic. The pH can vary between 4.5 and 8.7.

Exposition: Full sun. The plant needs a lot of light. Thus, a lack of sun during a cloudy week slows the growth of the plant.

Ideal temperature: Optimum growth is observed at temperatures varying between 25 and 28° C.

Minimum temperature: The cold reduces the pruning of the plant. Below 15° C, the growth of this ornamental plant is slow.

Watering: even though 90% of rice is grown in water, it can be easily grown in crop soil. However, care must be taken that the soil never dries out completely, so that it is as less permeable as possible. Frequent watering will keep it sufficiently moist.

Fertilization: Nitrogen is essential for its growth, so a fertilizer with a high nitrogen content gives good results. Composts and old manures are first-rate fertilizers.

Pruning: No pruning is necessary.

Vulnerability: Cold, lack of light and drought.

Particular attention: During periods of heat wave, it is necessary to water often and especially in depth

Horticultural award or honour:

Decorative value: The purple foliage of this rice enhances the corner of the garden where it is placed.

Special interest: Another choice to garnish the center of a stew.

General use: As this plant is very versatile, it can be used for several purposes. It is perfect for decorating a corner of a body of water. It also has its place in a hotpot. Finally, it makes a beautiful border plant or second row in a border.

Companion plants: In a body of water, it can be planted alongside elephant ears (Colocasia) with green or variegated foliage and even with purple foliage like the 'Black Magic' cultivar. In a border, this rice is a perfect companion for sedges (Carex), which have roughly the same cultural requirements.

Useful information: The life cycle of the plant is 120 to 180 days depending on the growing conditions (heat, sunshine, and fertilization).

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