

*Brassica carinata*

[Synonyms : *Brassica integrifolia*, *Brassica integrifolia* var. *carinata*, *Sinapis integrifolia*]

**ETHIOPIAN RAPE** is cultivated as an annual. Native to the Middle East and East Africa, particularly Ethiopia.

It is also known as *Abessinischer Senf* (German), Abyssinian cabbage, Abyssinian mustard, Ethiopian mustard, Ethiopian rapeseed, *Gomenzer* (Ethiopian), Mustard collard, Mustard seed, Teksel greens, and Texsel greens.

The plants are pollinated by bees.

Warning - the seed oil from the wild plant can be poisonous unlike that from some of the cultivated varieties.

*Carinata* means 'keeled (like a boat) or ridged'.

In the United States the University of Texas developed a variety of this species as a new, commercially viable vegetable which was christened Texsel greens (with accepted variations in the spelling) in recognition of that work.

Authorities believe that Ethiopian rape is a naturally occurring hybrid [of possibly black mustard (*Brassica nigra*) and cabbage (*Brassica oleracea* var. *capitata*)] from the Middle East and East Africa, especially Ethiopia.

It was introduced to northern Florida in North America in 1957 by which time it had already gained some familiarity in Europe.

As a vegetable the young leaves can be added to salads, the flower head can be cooked like broccoli (*Brassica oleracea* var. *italica*) and the large older leaves and the stems can be prepared like spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*). It can also be canned or frozen. The seed can be crushed for use as a condiment while the pressed seed oil from some of the varieties is also edible.

Ethiopian rape is particularly admired in tropical countries where, unlike so many of its close relatives, the plant thrives in a relatively hostile soil and climate. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries varieties of Ethiopian rape are also attracting attention as possible sources of bulk unprocessed vegetable matter or inedible seed oil that could be used as a fuel suitable for heating, or for the generation of electricity or powering vehicles. Results emanating from trials in various countries are also identifying derivatives from the seed oil that could be used by the plastics industry, as well as a seed cake (after oil extraction) which would be safe to use as animal feed.