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*Brassica napus* var. *napobrassica*

[Synonyms : *Brassica napobrassica*, *Brassica napus* var. *napus*, *Brassica napus* var. *oleifera*, *Brassica napus* var. *rapifera*, *Brassica rutabaga*]

**SWEDE** is a biennial (grown as an annual). Native to Europe (particularly Scandinavia) it has small, bright yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Kálrot* (Swedish), *Neep*, *Nevev* (Maltese), *Rotabagge* (Swedish), Russian turnip, *Rutabaga* (English and French), Swedish turnip, Turnip, and Turnip cabbage.

Warning – swede can be poisonous for animals if fed to them in large quantities over long periods.

*Napus* is Latin (kind of turnip) meaning ‘turnip-like’. *Napobrassica* is derived from Latin *napus* (kind of turnip) and the genus name *Brassica* components meaning ‘turnip-cabbage’.

In Scotland, Ireland and parts of northern England swede is known as Turnip (and turnip is called ‘swede’).

The swede did not exist before the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Some authorities suggest that it is a cross between the cabbage (*Brassica oleracea* var. *capitata*) and the turnip (*Brassica rapa*) that comes from Bohemia. It was an important vegetable in western Europe by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and crossed the Atlantic to North America in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Different cultivated varieties of swede now provide both food for human beings and animal fodder.

Medicinally, swedes have been used in folk medicine to treat whooping cough, coughs and kidney stones.