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Cyamopsis tetragonoloba

[Synonyms : *Cyamopsis psoraloides*, *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba*, *Dolichos fabiformis*, *Dolichos psoraloides*, *Lupinus trifoliatus*, *Psoralea tetragonoloba*]

GUAR GUM is an annual. Native to dry regions of Africa and Arabia.

It is also known as *Bakuchi* (Sanskrit), Cluster bean, *Gavar* (Gujarati), *Gorchikudu* (Telugu), *Gowar* (Hindi), Guar (English, Punjabi), Guar bean, *Koth-thaveray* (Tamil), and Siam bean.

Gum is obtained from the milled seeds.

Tetragonoloba is derived from Greek *tetra-* (four), *-gonia* (angle) and *lobos* (pod) components meaning 'with four-angled pods'.

This drought-resistant forage plant is thought to have been first domesticated in India and has been cultivated there for thousands of years. The very young pods (which become fibrous as they mature) are cooked as a hotly-spiced vegetable, and the ripe black, white or grey seeds are also eaten.

The seeds are milled for a flour that is reconstituted into a gum –and the gum is used as a thickening and stabilizing agent in many products. It has 5-8 times the power of starch. In the mining industry, it can be an ingredient in the mud pumped down the drill pipe.

In India guar gum has long been cultivated as both a green manure and fodder. In dry areas the seeds have also been fed to cattle to fatten them.

As already referred to the gum is used on a commercial scale by the mining industry, and also by the toiletry industry as a thickening agent in creams, lotions and shampoos. It is also used in printing pastes by the textile industry, and by the food and drinks industries in processed foods, including salad dressings, ice cream, etc., and in beverages. The paper production industry uses the gum as a strengthening additive to pulp, and the pharmaceutical industry employs it in appetite enhancers.

Medicinally, the fruit (which have a laxative effect) have been used in India to treat stomach upsets and night blindness.