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Vigna angularis

[Synonyms : *Azukia angularis*, *Dolichos angularis*, *Phaseolus angularis*]

ADZUKI BEAN is an annual. Native to Asia it has small pea-like flowers.

It is also known as *Adsukipapu* (Finnish), Aduki bean, *Adzukibohne* (German), *Adzuki böna* (Swedish), *Amberique (gros)* (French), *Azuki* (Japanese), *Azuki bean*, *Bohne* (German), *Chi dou* (Chinese), Green gram, and *Haricot anguleux* (French).

Angularis is derived from Latin *angulus* (angle, a corner) meaning ‘angular’.

The plant which some authorities believe is native to China, has long been cultivated in the East. It is thought that it was introduced to Japan between the 3rd and 8th Centuries.

For the Japanese adzuki bean sprouts could be called their answer to the Chinese bean sprout (*Vigna radiata*). It is understood however that apart from adzuki bean’s general use as a pulse in Japanese kitchens [the plant is a close rival to soya bean (*Glycine max*) in Japanese popularity] its prime use there is in the form of a bean paste upon which so many Japanese sweet confections apparently rely.

In fact this bean paste is also made by the Chinese not least for their mooncakes and New Year dumplings and – as the plant has been introduced elsewhere including Africa, Hawaii, India and New Zealand as well as North and South Americas and become more widely known – its value as a canned export commodity for both China and Japan has increased.