



Vegetable Shipment. George A. Smathers Libraries Archives, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.

African food crops have influenced Florida agriculture for several centuries, and a wide variety of African plants continue to grow in home gardens throughout the Sunshine State. Many African plants are easy to grow, and they offer an inexpensive source of delicious and nutritious food. A beginning gardener can plant the path to better nutrition with African food crops such as yams, roselle, okra, watermelon, pigeon peas and aloe.



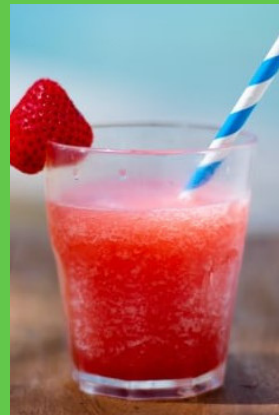
Roselle/Sorrel

Roselle, also called Sorrel, is a beautiful and hardy bush with edible leaves and flowers that have a cranberry-like taste. The leaves add zing to salads and the flowers can be eaten raw, preserved in a jam, or dried to make a tangy red tea served hot or iced.



Watermelon

Watermelons need space to grow on a vine. They can be eaten fresh in salads and smoothies, or frozen into popsicles and cubes. The rinds can be pickled. Watermelons are rich in water, simple sugars and fiber.



Sweet Yams

Yams are easy to grow and store. They can be prepared in pies, as fries, mashed, baked, and stuffed. They are rich in vitamins C, B5, manganese, folate magnesium, potassium, thiamine, and copper.



Okra

Okra thrives in the summer heat. It is often fried and used as an ingredient in African gumbo. Okra is rich in vitamins A, K, C, and B6, as well as in protein, potassium, folate, thiamine, and magnesium.





Pigeon Peas

Pigeon pea is a tall, drought-tolerant plant with beautiful flowers. The peas are cooked in stews and are a good source of protein, fiber, thiamine, copper, magnesium, folate, phosphorus, potassium, and manganese.



Aloe

Aloe grows well in dry soil. It is known for cosmetic and medicinal uses, but it is also a popular ingredient to refresh beverages. It contains vitamins A, C, E, and B12. It is also a good source of folic acid, choline, and amino acids.



References & Resources

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- Images from: University of Florida Archives, Florida Memory, Canva, Unsplash, Wikicommons, and Easelly

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