

Ruta chalepensis L.

Synonyms : *Ruta graveolens* L. var. *angustifolia* Hook.f.

Family : Rutaceae

Parts Used : Oil, Whole plant

Vernacular Names

English : Garden rue

Malayalam : Arootha

Hindi : Pismaram, Sadab

Sanskrit : Gucchapatra

Bengali : Ermul

Gujarathi : Satapa

Kannada : Sadabu

Tamil : Aruvadam

Telugu : Sadapa



Distribution and habitat: Native of South Europe and it is found in subtropical countries. Commonly cultivated in Indian gardens.

Botany: An aromatic evergreen perennial herb up to 75 cm high.

- **Leaves** : Compound, shortly petiolate, ultimate segments oblong or obovate-oblong.

- **Flowers**: Yellow, in divaricately spreading corymbs. Sepals triangular and acute. Petals oblong-obovate, pectinate, abruptly clawed.

- **Fruits** : Capsules, shortly pedicelled.

Chemical constituents:

- Roots contain coumarins-xanthyletin. The alkaloids are rutacridone-epoxide, gravacridonol and its monomethyl ether, gravacridonchlorine, furacridone and skimmianine.

- Aerial parts give coumarins bergapten, xanthotoxin and psoralen.

- Herb contains alkaloids such as kokusagenine, rutamine (methylgraveoline) and graveoline.

- The essential oil from leaves, stem and root yielded aliphatic ketones including 2-nonanone, undecyl-2-acetate, 2-nonyl acetate, nonylacetate, nonanol, 2-nonylpropionate, 2-undecanol and its esters. The oil from roots gives pregeijerene.

Uses:

- Known as Herb of Grace due to its service in the Roman Catholic Church for sprinkling the holy water among the congregation.

- Vitiating conditions of *kapha* and *vata*, strangury, fever, flatulence, colic, amenorrhoea, epilepsy and hysteria.

- Oil acts as a stimulant for uterine and nervous systems.

- Fresh leaves are used for rheumatism.

- Juice obtained from the leaves is given to children for helminthic infections and is good for odontalgia and otalgia.

- Dried leaves, powdered and combined with aromatics, are given as a remedy for dyspepsia and with the fresh leaves a tincture is made which is used as an external remedy in the first stages of paralysis.

Agro technology

Climate and soil: The plant is suited to areas which are about 1000 m above mean sea level and with moderate rainfall and sunlight.

Propagation: By seeds or stem cuttings. Stem cuttings of length 20-25 cm are to be planted in polybags for rooting. About 3-4 months old seedlings can be transplanted at a spacing of 45 cm and harvested when plants attain 6-8 months age.

Harvesting: From sixth month onwards.

