

## Introduction

Is an arm of Horticulture in which crop plants are intensively cultivated within a protected area called garden

Horticulture is derived from two Latin words: *Hortus* and *Colere*.

**Horticulture** is a science that deals with the production and utilization of garden crops. Horticulture is divided into four branches.

**Floriculture:** the science of production and utilization of ornamental plants.

**Olericulture:** the science of production and utilization of vegetable crops

**Pomology:** the science of production and utilization of fruit crops

**Landscape horticulture:** beautification and protection of the environment.

### Definition of Vegetable

The term vegetable is used to describe the tender edible shoot, leaves, fruits and root of plants and spices that are consumed whole or in part, raw or cooked as a supplement to starchy foods and meat.

## CLASSIFICATION OF VEGETABLES

1. According to the part consumed (disposition)
2. According to season or area of production
3. According to their botanical or taxonomy
4. According to their frequency of cultivation
5. According to their maturity time, harvesting pattern and growth habit

### 1. According to the part consumed

**Leafy vegetables:** the leaves and succulent young shoots are picked for consumption. Examples are amaranthus, celosia, pumpkin, lettuce, cabbage, bitter leaf, water leaf, jews mallow and fluted pumpkin.

**Fruit vegetables:** this comprises of young, immature unripe fruits or mature ripe fruits of plants grown as vegetables. Examples are cucumber, tomato, okra, pumpkin, eggplant, garden egg, water melon, sweet pepper and chilli pepper.

**Seed vegetables:** this group is important for the seed produced. Examples are Egusi melon and Ito melon.

**Root vegetables:** such as sweet potato, irish potato, carrot and radish.

**Spices:** important for their flavor and colour in foods such as chilli pepper, onion, garlic and basil.

## 2. According to Season/Climatic area/ area of cultivation

**Cool season vegetables:** such as cabbage, garlic, onion, radish, spinach, lettuce, potato and carrot.

**Warm season vegetables:** such as tomato, pepper, cucumber, okra, eggplant, garden egg, melon, pumpkin, sweet potato.

## 3, Botanical or Taxonomic Classification

Vegetables are classified according to family, genera and species. It is the most important and acceptable form of classification.

| Family        | Botanical name  | Common name              |
|---------------|---|--------------------------|
| Amaranthaceae | <i>Amaranthus dubius</i><br><i>Celosia argentea</i>     | Amaranth<br>Celosia      |
| Cucurbitaceae | <i>Cucurbita maxima</i><br><i>Cucumis sativus</i>       | Pumpkin<br>Cucumber      |
| Malvaceae     | <i>Abelmoschus esculentus</i> (L.)<br>Moench            | Okra                     |
| Solanaceae    | <i>Solanum tuberosum</i><br><i>Solanum melongena</i> L. | Irish potato<br>Eggplant |
| Tiliaceae     | <i>Corchorus olitorius</i> L.                           | Jews mallow              |
| Compositae    | <i>Vernonia colorata</i><br><i>Lactuca sativa</i>       | Bitter leaf<br>Lettuce   |
| Cruciferae    | <i>Brassica oleraceae</i><br><i>Raphanus sativus</i>    | Cabbage<br>Radish        |
| Portulacaceae | <i>Talinum triangulare</i>                              | Water leaf               |

|             |                      |                |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Basellaceae | <i>Basella rubra</i> | Indian spinach |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------|

#### 4. Frequency of Cultivation

**Regularly cultivated vegetables** – Onion, Amaranthus, Celosia, Egusi melon, Okra; Egg plant, Tomato and Pepper

**Occasionally/Wild vegetables** such as: mushroom (*Agaricus* spp, *Celosia triguna* Ajefawo) *Basella Rubra* (White) – Indian spinach *Basella alba* (Red) *Crassocephallum biafrae* - Bologi, *C. crepidoidis* - Ebolo

#### 5. According to their maturity time, harvesting pattern and growth habit

**Vegetables with short growing period and harvested two or three times by topping or young leaf removal:** This group consists of leafy vegetables such as *Amaranthus* spp and *Celosia argentea*.

**Vegetables which can be harvested over several weeks or months:** This group comprises of vegetables such as *Corchorus* spp, *Solanum* spp, *Capsicum* spp, Tomato, Okra, and Cucurbits.

**Vegetables with Climbing growth habit:** these are vegetables which are trained along a stake and on house walls. Examples are snake gourd, fluted pumpkin, ito melon and basella spp.

**Vegetables with Creeping stems:** such as melon, cucumber and water melon.