

# Jicama

## History

Jicama is a member of the potato family that has been growing in Mexico and Central America for centuries. It is thought to have originated in the Andes Mountains. Jicama production increased in the region after widespread draught in 1982 and 1983 affected potato production. Despite the dry weather, jicama was grown with good results. The jicama plant is actually a vine that grows to be about 20 feet long. The only part of the jicama plant that we eat is the root. Jicama can be found in most Mexican grocery stores as well as large supermarkets. Jicama harvest season occurs from November to May in Central and South America.

## Language Lesson

Jicama has many different names depending on what country or region you are in. Some of the common names are *yacón*, *yacuma*, *arboloco*, *leafcup*, *Mexican potato* and *Mexican yam bean*.



## Fun Facts

- Jicama can weigh up to 50 pounds but should be harvested when under five pounds.
- Jicama can be peeled like a potato and eaten raw.
- Raw jicama is very similar to raw apples- light, crisp, and sweet.
- Unlike apples, jicama does not turn brown when exposed to the air after being cut.
- Jicama is frequently added to other dishes because of its milk flavor and ability to absorb the taste of foods it is cooked with.



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