

PERENNIAL VEGETABLES

Babingtons Leek

Allium ampeloprasum babingtonii



A perennial wild leek, native to the UK, with garlicy leek flavour.

PLANT TYPE Vegetable

PLANT HABIT Perennial

USES Culinary

DESCRIPTION

A perennial wild leek, native to the UK, with garlicy leek flavour.

In the wild this plant is found growing on grass banks and shingle near the sea, though has no particular preferences for soil type as long as it is free draining and sunny. Starts growing in late winter and early spring.

It is a top setting form of *Allium ampeloprasum* and after flowering in summer, 'bulbils' form on the flower head that then can easily collected for further propagation.

ASPECT Full sun, Partial sun

HEIGHT 30cm with flower stalks to 1.8m

SPREAD 30cm

HARDINESS Hardy to -20°C

MANAGEMENT AND CARE

Will start flowering in second year. It's normal for perennial leeks to die back in late summer. Don't worry, they will be back in the late Winter! Do not harvest the plant in the first year, after which, to keep it perennial, cut off stem at soil level. Otherwise the whole leek can be harvested or in late summer, the underground bulb can also be used in cooking.

ORIGIN/HISTORY

Babington's Leek is a perennial sterile plant and studies have indicated that all specimens found in Britain and the Channel Islands are from a single clone.

Officially recorded for the first time in 1884 after being found in Galway, the plant is found mainly in the southwest of England preferring an open environment on sea cliffs, coastal heaths and woodlands. Found in clefts and coastal areas of Dorset and Cornwall

Historically was associated with settlements around the UK. Predates the garden leek in Britain.