

Crosne (*Stachys affinis*)

The Chinese artichoke, chorogi, knotroot, artichoke betony, or crosne, is a perennial herbaceous plant of the family Lamiaceae. Its rhizome can be grown as a root vegetable. While the plant is easy to grow, the tubers are small, convoluted, and indented.

Tubers - raw or cooked. Quite a pleasant mild flavour and easily digested, but fairly small and fiddly, they are about 5 - 8cm long and 2cm wide. A nutty artichoke-like flavour, it can be eaten raw on its own, be added to salads or be lightly cooked. It is best to harvest them as required. Yields are about 1kg per square metre.

It is hardy to zone 5 and is not frost tender. It is in flower from Jul to August. The flowers are hermaphrodite (have both male and female organs) and are pollinated by Insects.

Stachys affinis is a PERENNIAL growing to 0.5 m (1ft 8in).

Suitable for: light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils and prefers well-drained soil. Suitable pH: acid, neutral and basic (alkaline) soils. It can grow in semi-shade (light woodland) or no shade. It prefers moist soil.

