

***Achoccha — Cyclanthera pedata L.*¹**

James M. Stephens²

Achoccha is also called wild cucumber, caihua, and korila. However, it is unlike the viny plant known as wild cucumber in Florida, a weed pest in lawns and around the home with miniature cucumber-like leaves and fruits.



Achoccha.

inches wide, and hollow. The spongy pulp contains black seeds attached to the placenta in a manner similar to pepper. In fact, the fruits are eaten much like pepper pods, often stuffed and cooked but also eaten raw.

CULTURE

Propagation is by seeds, and the vines are often trellised. Similar soil preparation and fertilization practices as for cucurbits should be used.

This author has not observed it to produce fruit in Florida, when seeded in September and maturing in short days of a warm fall.

DESCRIPTION AND USE

Achoccha, which is rarely grown in Florida, does produce a trailing vine, but the leaves are segmented, usually with five further segmented lobes. The vine is stringy, quite long (up to 40 feet), and equipped with tendrils for climbing. The leaves are 4-5 inches wide and divided into several lobes, some of which are further divided into "mini-lobes." Fruits produced in Mexico and the Caribbean resemble hollow cucumbers. They are elongated, 4-6 inches long, 2-3

1. This document is HS538, one of a series of the Horticultural Sciences Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date April 1994. Reviewed March 2009. Visit the EDIS Web Site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

2. James M. Stephens, professor, Horticultural Sciences Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.