

Broccoli, Chinese — *Brassica alboglabra* L.¹

James M. Stephens²

Chinese broccoli has other names such as gai lohn, kai lan, and Chinese kale. It is one of the oriental vegetables that seems to do well in Florida gardens, particularly during the fall and winter.

DESCRIPTION

The plant resembles regular broccoli, although the leaves appear to be a bit broader and the stems somewhat longer than broccoli. The flowers form first into diminutive heads and then elongate rapidly into flower stalks bearing yellow flowers.

CULTURE

Chinese broccoli is a cool season vegetable that should be grown like regular broccoli. Pests, such as cabbage loopers, which bother regular broccoli, also attack the Chinese version. It seems to do well on plastic mulch if given adequate moisture. Space plants 6 inches apart in rows 12 to 24 inches wide.

HARVESTING AND USE

Harvest the flower stalk just before the flowers open. A few open buds do not reduce the quality. Leave a 4 to 6 inch portion of the flower stem attached. These stems are usually split before stir-frying or using in other cooked dishes.

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