

## **Gourd, Cucuzzi — *Lagenaria siceraria* (Mol.) Standl.<sup>1</sup>**

James M. Stephens<sup>2</sup>

Cucuzzi is also known as bottle gourd, calabash, suzza melon, zucca, Italian edible gourd, Tasmania bean, Guinea bean, New Guinea bean, and white flowered gourd. It is grown as a novelty garden item in Florida generally from seed advertised in seed catalogs as Guinea bean. The bottle gourd is another form, having somewhat different shaped fruits.



**Cucuzzi.**



**bottle gourd.**

### **DESCRIPTION**

The plant is a vining, musky-scented annual, with hairy, large shallow-lobed leaves on long petioles. Leaves sometimes measure 6-12 inches across. Both male and female flowers are white, with the male flower borne on a long slender stem. Fruits are edible in a young immature stage, usually when about 10 inches long. They are light green in color, with a very smooth surface.

Shape varies, but most fruits are long and cylindrical, up to 3 feet long and 3 inches in diameter. Some are coiled and twisted, but most are fairly straight and club-shaped. The white pulpy interior has many seeds, that at maturity are 1/2 inch long, white, and uniquely shaped. One end of the seed is pointed, while the other has three lobes.

### **CULTURE**

The plant grows vigorously, climbing on anything within reach. Plant and grow cucuzzi like polebeans, but give lots of room. Of great similarity to the cucuzzi is the snake gourd (*Trichosanthes anguina*), which is also called the club, viper, or serpent gourd.

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