Thai Red Roselle (Hibiscus)
HERB Hibiscus sabdariffa

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Hibiscus sabdariffa
This was the earliest variety in our trials. To speed germination, soak the seeds overnight in water, or abrade lightly with sandpaper. Practice 4-year rotation with cotton and okra.

Culture: Where the frost-free growing season is long, roselle may be direct sown once the soil warms to 75°F (3–5 weeks after last frost). Otherwise, transplant out 2–3 week-old seedlings grown in pots indoors. Handle gently to avoid damaging the tender roots. Provide well-drained soil. Too much nitrogen will reduce flowering.

Harvest: Snip off flowers and young leaves for salads. The bright red calyxes may be harvested at any time and candied, boiled for sauce and jam, or dried for a “red zinger” tea.

Seed Savers: Wait until the seeds have turned dark brown to finish drying indoors.