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Mauka information and growing instructions



Mauka caudices

Blanco produces large clusters of white/tan roots. We generally find it to be higher yielding than our other variety, Rojo. Its leaves also seem to have less calcium oxalate or whatever substance is responsible for the strange mouth feel that mauka leaves sometimes produce. Flowers are white and produced abundantly in early spring if you can keep the plants alive over winter. Blanco produces enough to eat in a single growing season, but has much higher yields after two years.

We offer both caudices (lower segments of stem) and seeds.



Mauka seeds

Mauka caudices are lower segments of stem with dormant buds. You plant them a couple of inches deep and they quickly root and sprout. We have been testing sending caudices through the mail for a couple of years and have found that they are pretty hardy and survive even long shipping times. The main problem is that they may begin active growth if the conditions are warm while they are in the mail. If they don't sprout, they can be kept in the refrigerator for months before planting. If they have sprouted, then it is generally best to pot them until they can be planted out. Unlike growing from seed, a caudex generally produces a full size plant in the first year.

Mauka is one of the few Andean root crops that is true breeding. The seeds are easy to start and have a germination rate of 90% or more. Plants grown from seed should be harvested in their second year or later unless you have a very long growing season. Unfortunately, the seeds are a pain to produce. They mature over a long period of time and they are difficult to collect. Because of that, I offer caudices as the standard and seeds only when I have the time to collect them.

Price: \$8.50 - \$23.50

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Oca information and growing instructions

This is an OSSI open source variety. Click for more information about open source seeds.

Phytosanitary information

Longview is a Cultivariable original variety, introduced in 2016, notable for excellent flavor and ability to flower in warmer conditions than most varieties.

Culinary Traits

Longview is non-acidic variety with a rich, somewhat squash-like flavor. It lacks the tartness that is characteristic of most oca varieties. The yellow flesh is very soft when cooked and the tubers will disintegrate with long cooking times. Like most oca varieties, Longview does not retain much of its color when cooked. The tubers are small side, but they are very nice roasted whole with a little olive oil.

Agronomic Traits

Longview plants are moderate in height and relatively compact. The tubers are formed on stolons of intermediate length. Tuberization photoperiod is about 12 hours, the same as most of the heirloom varieties. Average yield is 1.1 pounds. The maximum tuber length is 3.5 inches and the average tuber length is 1 inch. Average tuber count is 26. Tubers are evenly distributed from small to large.

Longview is an abundant flowerer with a mid-styled flower morph. This variety flowered and set seed in the central valley of California, which is a climate where oca flowers are rarely seen. Because of that, it could serve as a foundation for growers wishing to breed better locally adapted varieties in warmer climates than oca normally tolerates.

True Seeds

True seeds of Longview produce tubers mostly in yellow and orange and a smaller number of whites and reds. Even numbers of tubers with and without colored eyes. Mostly yellow or white flesh.

Price: \$6.50 - \$12.00

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Oca information and growing instructions

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Phytosanitary information

Redshift is a Cultivariable original variety, introduced in 2013. It is notable for heavy yield and excellent flowering.

Culinary Traits

Refshift has no tartness or sweetness and tastes very much like potato. The cooked texture is soft. It loses much of its color when cooked, becoming pink or even white.

Agronomic Traits

Redshift plants are among the largest of any variety that we grow, first becoming very tall and then sprawling. The tubers cluster under the base of the plant and may become crowded, producing irregular shapes. Tuberization photoperiod is about 12.5 hours, a week earlier than most heirloom varieties. Average yield is 1.8 pounds. Maximum tuber length is 5.2 inches and average tuber length is 1.6 inches. Average tuber count is 36. This variety produces about twice as many small tubers as large.

Redshift is an exceptional flowerer with a mid-styled flower, flowering here from June through October. It is consistently among the top three producers of true seed here, along with Siwash and Wishkah.

What you will receive

Tubers

You will receive the stated number of tubers, packaged in a wax envelope. We grade tubers by passing them through a grate. Small tubers are those that won't fall through a 1/3" grate, but that will fall through a 1 inch grate. Medium/large tubers are those that will not fall through a 1 inch grate.

Seeds

Seeds are open pollinated. Because oca is a polyploid hybrid, the seeds will not grow true to type. They are suitable for use in breeding or conservation efforts and could be used to select varieties similar to the parent type.

Price: \$6.50 - \$12.00

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Skirret information and growing instructions

Skirret (*Sium sisarum*) is a historically interesting and tasty root crop. Not particularly high yielding, but forgiving and perennial. After two years, or perhaps one in really favorable conditions, you get a small clump of thin, white, carrot-like roots. Flavors are subjective, but I find that it has a flavor somewhere between carrot and parsnip. It likes wet, shady conditions, so it may give you a food crop in areas that otherwise don't get much use.

Seeds have a good germination rate, but are slow to get started. Give it two months – some will germinate in a week, others after you are sure there is no hope. A soil temperature of 70 degrees seems to be optimal, so if you are going to direct sow, don't start them too early. Skirret will also happily transplant, so if you start them inside about 60 days before your last frost, you can have seedlings ready to go. Once you have a plant, you can propagate it vegetatively with ease, although this is another uncommon plant that would really benefit from some more enthusiasts growing it from seed on a regular basis.

Group 1 includes only plants grown from seeds of the few that survived a serious disease event here in 2014. These plants are the clone that we offer as offsets. The population had already been selected for improved root size and now hopefully also carries improved disease resistance. I think that the disease that the parent plants survived was celery blight, but I'm not certain.

Group 2 seed is collected from our entire skirret population, with the exception of those in Group 1. This includes plants from seven different sources: three genebank accessions, two wild collections from Europe, and two varieties obtained as superior clones. As far as I'm aware, this is the greatest skirret diversity available anywhere. This mix should be of primary interest to breeders. For the more casual skirret grower, Group 1 seed is likely to provide superior results.

Price: \$5.50 – \$20.00

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