

July 2022

**Artichoke - *Cynara cardunculus ssp. scolymus* (L.)Hegi**

From the composite family (Asteraceae)

The artichoke is a perennial, thistle-like cultivated plant with a high ornamental value. The sturdy stem grows up to 2 m tall from a basal rosette of leaves with large, pinnately lobed foliage. From the second year of growth, edible flower buds develop with a fleshy flower base and bracts arranged like a roof tile, which are also fleshy in the lower part of the bracts. The open flower shows splendid violet tubular flowers. The plant originates from the Mediterranean region and prefers warm locations.

The artichoke is also a medicinal plant. It contains bitter substances, flavonoids and cynarine. Artichokes are said to have an appetising, digestive and cholesterol-lowering effect.

In the garden, the artichoke wants a warm, sunny location with humus-rich soil. Waterlogging should be avoided. Note that the artichoke can develop into a very large plant in several years, so it needs a lot of space in the bed. In winter the plant needs protection. Due to its multiple uses, the artichoke is an interesting plant that is also very popular with insects at flowering time.

