

# Maca Root Profile

## Also known as

*Lepidium mayenil*

## Introduction

Often called "Peruvian Ginseng", Maca is a unique root tuber with usage dating back to the mid 15th century. Natives of this area ate it raw, cooked or boiled and it became a staple in their everyday diet. Contrary to some literature citing its use some 2000 years ago to tout sexual stamina, this is hardly correct. Truth is, the rough terrain of this region made it difficult to cultivate food so most of the communities diet was dependant on wild gathered material, hence the Maca was incorporated into their daily food consumption. It resembles a radish and is actually a close relative as well. The growing conditions are very specific and it will only thrive in the glaciated slopes of the Andes with a prime elevation of 12,000 to 15,000 feet above sea level. Currently the country of Peru is heavily subsidizing and studying the benefits of this root and several reports from educational and scientific institutions have showed significant (120-200%) increases in sexual endurance, physical stamina, adaptability to stressful situations and an increase in both the number and activity of spermatozoids (sperm). While this information has not been thoroughly reviewed or studied much outside of Peru, the users' testimonies for the last several years are notable.

## Constituents

High in minerals (calcium, potassium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, and zinc), sterols (6 found), up to 20 essential fatty acids, lipids, fiber, carbohydrates, protein, and amino acids.

## Parts Used

The whole powdered or sliced root in either raw or roasted form.

## Typical Preparations

The whole root can be eaten raw, sliced, cooked, boiled or baked. Currently Western users utilize it in the form of a medicinal drink made from the powder or, taken in the form of tablets, capsules, and as a liquid extract. It can be easily and safely sprinkled in culinary dishes.

## Summary

Not much research has been carried out for this particular botanical out of its native country Peru, but several distinguished journals and scientists worldwide have supported what the Peruvian researchers have done and the preliminary studies they published. Maca root is being effectively administered to both men and women to help increase libido, men's sperm activity, and to assist both sexes with issues regarding their physical endurance and threshold. Most Maca roots are being wildharvested and we

foresee grave danger for the safety and sustainability of this botanical. Trial cultivation plots are under way; attempting to address the situation. With any luck we will see an increase of imported Maca from this source. As with all potentially endangered plants, consume consciously.

## **Precautions**

To date no record of any contraindications, adverse effects, or toxicity have been found.