

In response to questions from members of the Kitchen Culture Cooking Club Facebook group, I summarize information regarding

EDIBLE CHRYSANTHEMUM (食用菊 *shoku yō kiku*).

All chrysanthemum flowers are edible, but only the species *Chrysanthemum coronarium* has edible greens. These are called *shungiku* 春菊 and/or *kikuna* 菊菜 in Japanese.

Most YELLOW *shoku yō kiku* sold in Japan are **Chrysanthemum coronarium** or **Chrysanthemum morifolium**; most PURPLE *shoku yō kiku* sold in Japan are *motte no hoka* (**Chrysanthemum morifolium** Ramatuelle)



Upper left: *Chrysanthemum coronarium*

Lower left: *Chrysanthemum morifolium*

Upper right: yellow = Abōkyu; purple = kaki no moto (*Chrysanthemum morifolium*)

Lower right: *motte no hoka* (*Chrysanthemum morifolium* Ramatuelle)

Different regions in Japan use different names for similar varieties of Chrysanthemums.

Yamagata calls them *motte no hoka* もってのほか (山形) Niigata calls them *kaki no moto* カキノモト (新潟) Aomori calls them Abōkyu 阿房宮 (青森)

CAUTION: All chrysanthemum plants but especially *Chrysanthemum coccineum* contain a natural insecticide called **pyrethrin**, which consumed in large quantities can be toxic. Even low levels can be toxic to dogs, cats, horses and small children. Pyrethrin works by altering nerve function: it causes paralysis in insects (hence its use as an insecticide). Extended exposure can cause contact dermatitis, (redness and blisters), stiffness and mouth sores.