

# Discover the Flora of Our Campus

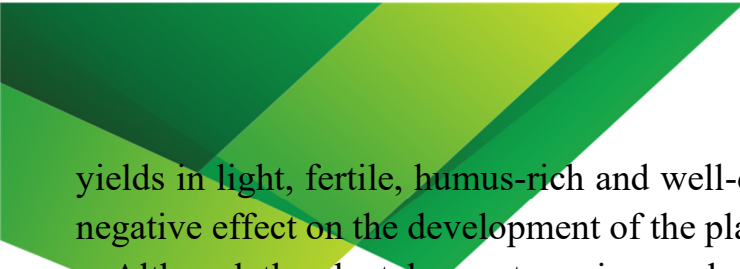
## *Common dill (Anethum graveolens)*

Fennel, scientifically known as *Anethum graveolens*, is an annual aromatic herb belonging to the Asteraceae family. It is known among the people simply as dill and is one of the most popular spice plants widely used in the kitchen. It is distinguished by its thin, stalk-like structure and strong pleasant aroma. Both its green leaves, seeds, and sometimes its stem are used for various purposes. Fennel has been cultivated for both food and medicinal purposes since ancient times. It is believed to have originated in the Mediterranean basin and Southwest Asia. Today, it is cultivated in many countries of the world and occupies an important place, especially in Azerbaijani cuisine.



*Anethum graveolens* is an annual herb with a thin, erect and branching stem. It can usually reach a height of 40 to 120 centimeters. The stem is smooth, hollow and green in color. The leaves are very finely divided, stalk-like, soft and light green in color. These leaves give the plant a delicate and hairy appearance. Its most characteristic feature is its strong and unique aroma. The initial distribution area of fennel is thought to be the Mediterranean basin, Egypt, Iran and India. Since it has been cultivated by humans since ancient times, it later spread to Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. Currently, it is widely grown in temperate and subtropical climate zones. In Azerbaijan, fennel is one of the most widely used green plants and is cultivated in almost all regions. It can be grown both in open ground, in greenhouses and in pots at home. It is widely sold fresh in the markets in the spring and autumn seasons. It is very common in gardens and private farms.

*Anethum graveolens* is a sun-loving plant and requires plenty of light for good development. It grows better in open, sunny areas and forms a stronger aroma. It gives high



yields in light, fertile, humus-rich and well-drained soils. Too heavy and boggy soil has a negative effect on the development of the plant.

Although the plant does not require much water, regular moisture is important, especially in the young growth stage. In drought conditions, the leaves can harden and the quality may decrease. Since it has a short vegetation period, it can be planted several times in one season.

Dill is considered one of the most beneficial plants for human health. Its leaves and seeds are rich in vitamin C, vitamin A, calcium, iron, magnesium and antioxidants. It helps improve the functioning of the digestive system, increase appetite and strengthen the body. It is widely used in folk medicine against gas, bloating and digestive problems.

Infusions made from fennel seeds are considered to have a calming and spasm-reducing effect. It has been used in some traditional methods to reduce the problem of flatulence in babies. However, when used for medical purposes, attention should be paid to the amount.

Its seeds are also valuable as a spice. They are used in marinades, pickles, bread and some sauces. Since it has a strong aromatic property, it is effective even in small quantities.

In folk medicine, various infusions are prepared from its leaves and seeds. It is also used in pharmacy and herbal preparations. It also has some importance in cosmetics and in the production of essential oils. In addition, it is sometimes planted as an ornamental plant in gardens due to its decorative appearance.

Fennel was considered not only food in ancient Egypt and ancient Rome, but also a protective and sacred plant. According to some beliefs, it was believed to protect against bad energy. There is information that Roman warriors used fennel for strength and endurance.

The word "graveolens" in the scientific name of the plant means "strongly fragrant" in Latin, which refers to its characteristic aroma. Fennel seeds retain their aroma for a very long time and have been considered valuable since ancient times.

An interesting fact is that in some countries, fennel is used not only as a spice, but also as a tea plant. Tea made from the seeds is considered both relaxing and beneficial for digestion.

