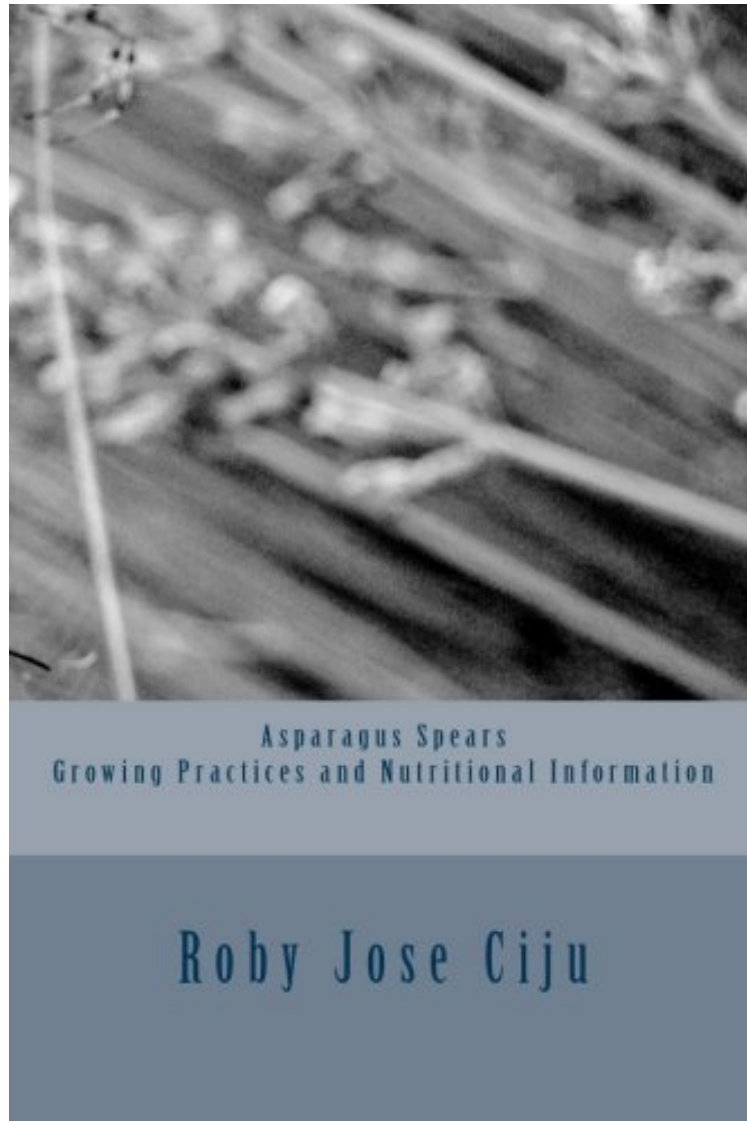


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# Asparagus Spears Growing Practices and Nutritional Information

*Roby Jose Ciju*

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Asparagus is a cool-season vegetable that belongs to the family Liliaceae. Botanical name of asparagus is *Asparagus officinalis*. It is an herbaceous perennial plant. Tender shoots (spears) of asparagus plants are used as a leafy vegetable. Asparagus is believed to be originated in Europe, Africa and Asia. Young shoots of Asparagus are very rich in minerals like iron, phosphorus, potassium, copper, manganese, selenium, calcium, magnesium and zinc. It is also rich in vitamins and major vitamin present in asparagus are vitamin B6, vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin E, vitamin K, thiamin, riboflavin, rutin, niacin, and folic acid. Asparagus shoots are low in calories, low in sodium, rich in protein and a rich source of dietary fiber. Asparagus shoots are also rich in an amino acid called asparagine. Dried asparagus roots are used as a medicine because of its diuretic properties. Productive life of a well-managed commercial asparagus plantation is about 10 to 15 years.