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## **Ginkgo Cultivation in China with Reference to Varietal Taxonomy**

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*Ginkgo biloba* L. is a valuable plant endemic to China and widely distributed across the country. It ranges from Northeast China to South China, spanning 26 provinces within the latitudes 22 to 42°N. The production centers are in Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Anhui, Hubei, Jiangxi, Hunan, Henan, and Guangxi. Presently there are more than 2 million trees nationwide, which produced 30,000 tons per year. Among them, 6000 tons were exported. Ginkgo seeds, called “baiguo” (white nut) in China, have long been used in our doctors’ prescriptions and are widely welcome as an appetizer, with high nutrition and good effect in diet therapy against cardiovascular diseases. It is rich in protein (13.6%), Ca, Fe, P, and vitamins A, B, C. The ginkgolides, flavon, and biflavon isolated from the leaves are peculiar medicinal substances helping to cure patients of such diseases as tracheitis, heart disease, and cerebral hemorrhage. The long-lived ginkgo tree, which has been grown in China for as long as 3000 years, is also famous for its valued timber and ornamental characteristics of good crown, well-structured branches, and golden yellow leaves in Autumn. Therefore, more than 50 countries have cultivated this “living fossil” for its multiple uses. The intraspecific variants of *G. biloba*, due to cross-pollination, and the clones from long-time selection resulted many elite cultivars. To meet the needs of mass production and intensive management, a systematic arrangement of ginkgo cultigens was developed. The classification falls into four categories, i.e., section, group, subgroup, and cultivar.

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**Note:** Donglin Zhang is also a guest professor at Central South University of Forestry and Technology, Changsha, Hunan, China.