



MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE  
STATE UNIVERSITY  
INTERNATIONAL  
GINSENG INSTITUTE

**Middle Tennessee State University**  
School of Agriculture  
International Ginseng Institute  
**April 2019 Newsletter**

**International Ginseng Institute supports North Carolina Ginseng Association Conference**

At the invitation of Warren Wilson College in Ashville, North Carolina, Dr. Iris Gao, IGI Director, attended and participated in the North Carolina Ginseng Association Conference in March of 2019.

Participants included university faculty, forest farmers, ginseng dealers, and government agency personnel. NGO representatives included, among others, United Plant Savers, Appalachian Sustainable Development Coalition, Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Red Moon Herbs, Center for Food and Culture, Future Generations University, and LiKEN Knowledge.



*From left to right: RJ Taylor, Riverlink; Iris Gao, MTSU; Shawn Swartz, Warren Wilson College; Jessica Larson, North Carolina Ginseng Association*



Topics included current legislation around wild ginseng harvesting, current general policies, ginseng processing, marketing, sustainability concerns, support, sharing of resources, and future directions. Dr. Iris Gao spoke introduced the International Ginseng Institute (IGI) at MTSU and explained MTSU's ginseng conservation and commercial efforts. She also developed a collaboration and information exchange with the North Carolina Ginseng Association.

*A rare 35-year-old wild American Ginseng root donated to the IGI by Mr. Caleb Trivett. This type of root may offer the chance to observe and baseline ginsenoside content in older roots.*

Betty Belanus of the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage announced that she has been tasked to conduct research for the 2020 Smithsonian Folklife Festival. The event will highlight the history, folklore, harvest, conservation, and use of American ginseng. Dr. Gao was invited to present research perspectives on American Ginseng at the Smithsonian's Festival and was also invited to be on their Festival advisory committee. If you would like to be kept abreast of the



*From left to right: Mary Hufford, LiKEN Knowledge; Lucy Long, Center for Food and Culture; Betty Belanus, Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage; Iris Gao, MTSU*



Smithsonian's Festival as it develops please contact Dr. Gao or watch for further information on future emails. This event promises to raise the profile of American ginseng highlighting your product to a broader market.

## New Legislative Benefits Tennessee Ginseng Growers

Legislation spearheaded by the IGI was passed in Tennessee (HB0103 by Faison and SB0919 by Southerland) to legally classify as "wild" the undisturbed growth of planted seeds, plantlets, and transplanted roots. The amendment to TCA Title 70, Chapter 8, Part 2, was signed into law by Governor Lee in April. More about the importance of this in our next newsletter. Many thanks to our Tennessee Legislators!

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 70, Chapter 8, Part 2, relative to ginseng.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 70-8-202(7), is amended by deleting the subdivision and substituting instead the following:

(7) "Wild ginseng" means ginseng occurring in its native woodland habitat, and includes the ginseng that is growing naturally in that habitat or that was introduced or increased in abundance in its natural habitat by sowing ginseng seed, introducing plantlets sourced from wild ginseng stock, or by transplanting ginseng plants from other woodland areas.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 70-8-202, is further amended by inserting the following as a new subdivision:

( ) "Plantlets" means young or small plants, which naturally create stolons with plantlets on the ends as a form of asexual reproduction. Vegetative propagules or clippings of mature plants may be used to create plantlets;

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

## Welcome Our New Staff



Dr. Tae Seok Ko joined us as a Research Technician with International Ginseng Institute this Aril. He is a valuable addition to our program.

Prior to joining IGI at MTSU, Dr. Ko worked at North Dakota State University, focusing on hydroponic lettuce production and non-destructive phenotyping under abiotic stresses with chlorophyll fluorescence sensing of leafy green vegetables in controlled environment systems. Prior to NDSU, Dr. Ko worked

as a faculty member for 6 years in the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Graduate Program at Hankyong National University in Korea. He operated the plant biotechnology laboratory with creating and implementing various research collaboration programs in the field of plant tissue culture and biotechnology.

After he received his Ph.D. in Plant Physiology from Texas A&M University, he worked at University of Illinois for 7 years as the Research Specialist in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences and at University of Minnesota for 2 years as the Research Associate in the Departments of Crop Science. He is an expert in the areas of plant tissue culture, plant molecular biology, and genetic transformation for crop improvement and has made significant scientific contributions in these areas throughout his research career for more than 20 years.

### What's Next...



JONES COLLEGE OF BUSINESS  
*Business and Economic Research Center*

## Brown Bag **Research** Presentations

- **May 1, 2019**
- **BAS S326 – SunTrust Room**
- **11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

*Bring your own lunch. Snacks and water provided.*



### Presentations



#### Analyzing Market Dynamics for American Wild Ginseng

- **Iris Gao**, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Director of International Ginseng Institute
- **Murat Arik**, PhD, BEREC Director and Assistant Professor, Management

As always, remember that the International Ginseng Institute is your resource for all things Ginseng. Don't hesitate to contact us with your thoughts or concerns. We will keep you connected with the Community and continue to make this a better experience for all.

Visit us at [www.mtsu.edu/ginseng](http://www.mtsu.edu/ginseng)

Write to us at [ginseng@mtsu.edu](mailto:ginseng@mtsu.edu)