

Conservation Status of Mulberry Genetic Resources in Korea

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At the Department of Sericulture and Entomology, NIAST, RDA, we have collected more than 615 accessions of both indigenous and exotic origin of mulberry species, which are maintained both in field and greenhouse and a large number of morphological and agronomical characters are being evaluated for utilization in breeding programs. In 2001, the Department of Sericulture and Entomology, National Institute of Agricultural and Science Technology (NIAST), Rural Development Administration (RDA) was designated as Institute responsible for maintenance and conservation of mulberry germplasm. All the accessions have been classified according to taxonomic groups by classification system of the mulberry species that was established by Koizumi. According to Koizumi's system that classified the genus *Morus* into 24 species and one subspecies, we classified the mulberry accessions preserved at the Department of Sericulture and Entomology of NIAST into 8 species. Korea has 4 endemic species out of 8, namely *M. bombycis* Koidz., *M. tiliaefolia* Makino, *M. mongolica* (Bureau) Schneider and *M. alba* L. Majority of mulberry accessions available are of *M. alba* L., *M. latifolia* (*M. lhu*) and *M. bombycis*, which are widely cultivated in Korea. In all, there are 615 accessions comprising of 205 indigenous, 151 exotic and 259 unclassified strains being preserved in Korea. Among the exotic strains majority of them are from Japan (129) followed by Iran (17) and China (16). The major portion of indigenous accessions comprises of local selection, F1 hybrids, polyploid lines.