

Citrus: Evolution with Human Life

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Summary

Citrus is fully connected with human life. Its origin is the southern part of the Himalaya Mountains. Citrus spread over the world via two ways. One was towards the west which contained oranges, lemons and citron. Citron is the oldest citrus fruit, recorded in Mesopotamia and Egypt. Some orange strains were imported from China into Portugal in the Age of Great Voyages. Afterwards oranges propagated to New World. Another was to the east which contained mandarins, pummelos and kumquats. There have been many citrus varieties in China since the Chou Dynasty. Some citrus varieties spread out of Japan in the Yamato Era. But they propagated very little at first. After that in the Sengoku Era, citrus was cultivated more than before. In the Edo Era, citrus industry and varieties increased greatly.

However the citrus variety increased, some excellent ones were lost due to lack of a citrus germplasm conservation. Nowadays in developing countries many citrus cultivars face Genetic Erosion. They may have useful contents for human life. We must collect citrus varieties as soon as possible.