



新聞稿 PRESS RELEASE

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Boost for Ginseng Research

The Chinese University of Hong Kong's Chinese Medicinal Material Research Centre (CMMRC) received a donation of \$400,000 from Mr Peter H.C. Chiu for support of its research programmes on the quality of ginseng.

Prof Paul But, Director of CMMRC, disclosed that the Centre had developed methods for the authentication and quality analysis of ginseng using chemical and DNA-fingerprinting techniques. These methods can be used to distinguish genuine ginseng from adulterants and also differentiate Oriental ginseng (*Panax ginseng*) from American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*). Biological studies at the Centre on ginseng have shown significant effects on the immune and cardiovascular systems, thus lending support to the traditional claims in Chinese medicine. The donation will be used in studying the quality of ginseng products.

Hong Kong is a major entrepot for ginseng. Over 80% of the American ginseng produced in North America is shipped to Hong Kong, for processing and redistribution to other parts of the world. A very substantial amount of ginseng also come to Hong Kong from China and Korea every year. Hong Kong trade statistics showed that import volumes of ginseng doubled every decade between 1952 and 1982 and then tripled between 1982 and 1992, with a record high of 3,894,980 kg in 1990. The total import volume and value of Oriental ginseng and American ginseng in 1995 were 3,497,411 kg and HK\$1,567,776,000, respectively.

The donor, Mr Peter H.C. Chiu, is the Chairman of Pan Seas Holdings Limited and a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. He and his family has been a key member of the local ginseng industry for over 40 years. Mr Chiu wishes that, through scientific studies at CMMRC, the quality of ginseng products can be upgraded and standardized for the benefit of ginseng-users.