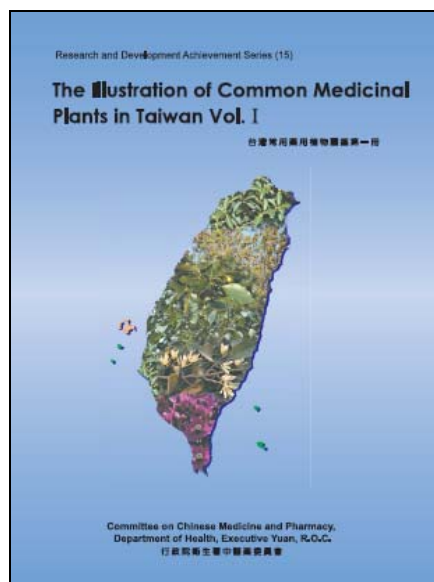


The Illustration of Common Medicinal Plants in Taiwan Vol.I



Introduction

Medicinal plants have been vital for human health since prehistory. In Taiwan, there are more than 12 thousand traditional medicines recorded, of which most are herbal medicines. As the wave of natural healing returns, all major pharmaceuticals in the world are now vigorously devoting into the research. The new market of herbal medicine can be inaugurated from both aspects of preventive medicine and treatment.

The natural environment of Taiwan is very favorable. From plains to high mountains, the climate ranges from temperate, subtropical to tropical. There are abundant biological resources. As estimated by the Council of Agriculture, there are about 150 thousand species in Taiwan, equivalent to 1.5% of all species in the world, of which many are precious biomedical resources. However, in Taiwan's ever accelerating social economic environment; large parts of the western coastline have been developed into industrialized zones, while the eastern coastline is gradually irrigated by concrete. As a result, a variety of species in coastal

lines, intertidal zones and wetlands are lost in large quantity. Natural reserves in Taiwan are severely threatened and may face endangerment. In view of this, as early as 1972, the Department of Health, Executive Yuan commissioned Professor Gan, Wei-Song from the former China Medical College to lead a series of research on medicinal plants in Taiwan. When the Committee on Chinese Medicine and Pharmacy was established in November 1995, it continued commissioning China Medical College to carry out studies on medicinal plants in Taiwan. This time led by Professor Hsieh, Wen-Chiuan; research results were compiled into a book, published in Chinese for the reference of the general public.

This series is comprised of a total of three volumes, in which 1,217 wild or cultivated medicinal plants are recorded. The first volume in this series contains 328 medicinal plants. The name, species name, family name, variant name, morphology, producing area, distribution, content, pharmacology, effects, etc. are all listed. The entire book contains corresponding pictures for all the medicinal herbs, providing TCM pharmaceutical, academic and related fields with accurate knowledge of medicinal plants. The Chinese version was published in September 2002, and it ranked first place in the "2003 Outstanding Government Publication" competition in March 2003.

In 2002, for the first time, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced the **【 WHO TRADITIONAL MEDICINE STRATEGY 2002-2005 】**, recommending more than 180 countries to include traditional medicine as part of their health care policies. Additionally, to promote using traditional medicine safely and appropriately, WHO further announced "Guidelines on developing consumer information on proper use of traditional, complementary and alternative medicines." In June 2004, FDA of the United States also disclosed many amendments that had been drafted since 1996 for the "Guidance for Industry Botanical Drug Products." All of the above indicate that traditional medicine has been growing prosperously worldwide. In view that traditional medicine has increasingly become more highly regarded, and also due to the fact that great responses had been received for this publication; the Committee

on Chinese Medicine and Pharmacy has especially commissioned international famous botanical experts, Professor Huang, Tseng-Chieng and his research team to compose a new edition. After many discussions, books in this series were revised, edited, laid out, and ii translated into English. Although professor Huang is a senior man, he still has been admirably working diligently and dedicated to the revision of the series. It is anticipated that as this book becomes available, it would be able to accelerate the exchange of relevant information, to form international links, and to promote the internationalization of Taiwan's traditional medicine.

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