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SOURCE Chung-kuo ti Ma-lei Tso-wu (China's Fiber Crops), Shang-wu Yin-shu Kuan (Commercial Press), Shanghai, 2d printing, 1953 []

DATA ON FIBER CROPS IN CHINA

Ch'en Hsi-ch'en

[Summary: The principal fiber crops cultivated in China are ramie, flax, hemp, jute, ambary, and abutilon. Ramie and jute are cultivated in the regions south of the Yangtze River, flax in the Northeast and Northwest, abutilon in North China, and Central China, ambary in the Northeast and in East China, and hemp is grown throughout the nation. The annual production is difficult to estimate. Ramie, hemp, and abutilon have been exported in the past, but as yet jute, ambary, and flax do not meet domestic demands.

The main fibers produced in China are ramie, flax, hemp, jute, abutilon, and ambary. In the different regions of the nation, however, these six fibers are known by various names. Below are the fibers and various names by which they are known:

<u>Fiber</u>	<u>Variations in Names</u>
Ramie (<i>Boehmeria nivea</i>)	Chu (Chekiang); ch'u-tzu (Kwangtung); hsien-ch'u (Honan); pai-ma, shou-pa-ma, p'ien-ma, ch'ing-ma (commercial names given according to quality and manufacturing use)
Flax (<i>linum usitatissimum</i>)	Hu-ma (Northwest provinces)

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<u>Fiber</u>	<u>Variations in Names</u>
Hemp (<i>Cannabis sativa</i>)	Huo-ma (Szechwan); huang-ma (Chekiang, Anhwei); hsien-ma (North, East China); hua-ma, mu-ma, ta-tzu-ma, hao-ma (Hopeh, Pao-ting); hung-ma (Honan); pai-ma, ch'ing-ma, hei-ma (commercial)
Jute (<i>Corchorus capsularis</i>)	Lu-ma, lo-ma (Chekiang); Taiwan lu-ma, t'ai-ma (Chekiang); sha-ma, chia-t'ou-lu-ma, chi-kua-huang-ma
Ambary (<i>Hibiscus cannabinus</i>)	Yin-tu-lu-ma (Chekiang); chin-ma
Abutilon (<i>Abutilon avicennae</i>)	Pai-ma (Hopeh); huo-ma, ch'iu-ma, hsiu-ma (Honan); ch'ing-ma (Northeast, North China); yao-yung-ma (Anhwei); ch'ing-ma (Kiangsu)

Generally speaking, the regions south of the Yangtze are considered the main ramie- and jute-producing areas; the Northeast and Northwest are flax regions, and North and Central China are abutilon-growing regions. Ambary is a relatively new crop, and at present is mainly produced in the Northeast and in East China.

The distribution of ramie extends from Hainan in the south to the southern portions of Shansi and Shensi in the north. All provinces within these limits cultivate ramie, but the main ramie-growing areas are in the Yangtze River basin -- Kiangsi, Hupeh and Hunan. The ramie production of these provinces is more than one half of the total national production. Other provinces, such as Szechwan, Kweichow, and Anhwei, each have an annual ramie production of over 50,000 tan [about 2.5 million kilograms].

Flax is cultivated in the Northwest, Northeast, and North China. The flax grown in North and Northwest China is cultivated for its seed oil; flax used for its fibers is grown mainly in the Northeast, which produces over 90 percent of the national production. In the past, Heilungkiang, Sungkiang, and Kirin were the main producers of flax. After liberation, the Northeast People's Government promoted the cultivation of flax for its fibers, and it is expected that flax growing will be expanded throughout the nation.

China is the hemp producing center of the world. Hemp is grown in almost all of the provinces but the Northeast, East, and North China produce the most. Anhwei produces the most hemp, with Shantung next; but Kirin, Heilungkiang, and Sungkiang all have an annual production of more than 100,000 tan [about 5 million kilograms].

Jute is grown in the regions south of the Yangtze, where rains are comparatively heavy, and East China is considered the main jute region. In Chekiang, the 1951 production of jute increased more than five times over that of 1949.

Ambary was introduced into the Northeast by the Japanese in 1938, but its cultivation was not developed very much during the war years. Since the liberation, however, there has been an annual expansion of the ambary area, and at present Liaosi and Chekiang are the main producers of this fiber.

Abutilon is cultivated in the areas north of the Yangtze. The main producers are East China, North China, and the Northeast; very little abutilon is grown in the other regions. Among the provinces, Hopeh and Shantung produce the most, each having an annual production of more than 100,000 tan [about 5 million kilograms].

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China has the greatest variety of and the most extensively cultivated fiber crops in the world. However, because of the corruption and ineptness of the previous government, there was no desire to develop the rich agricultural resources. There were no dependable production statistics for the various agricultural crops. Nevertheless, based on many incomplete and fragmentary statistics, the annual production of fibers can be approximated:

China's Fiber Production (in tan)*

<u>Area</u>	<u>Ramie</u>	<u>Flax</u>	<u>Hemp</u>	<u>Jute</u>	<u>Ambari</u>	<u>Abutilon</u>
Northeast	--	1,322,504	581,048	--	448,454	160,892
North China	--	3,120	98,890	--	1,500	205,470
Northwest	15,000	11,780	51,040	--	--	--
East China	224,700	23,800	538,600	950,500**	49,740	237,330
Central-South China	856,930	--	9,880	75,050	--	27,500
Southwest	179,250	--	28,790	15,000	--	--
Total	1,275,880	1,361,204	1,308,248	1,040,550	499,694	631,192

* [one tan equals 50 kilograms]

** Jute production in East China includes some ambari.

Of the six types of fiber cultivated in China, ramie, hemp, and abutilon have been exported. Jute, ambari, and flax as yet do not meet domestic needs. Following are a few brief notes on past production, trade, and domestic consumption of China's fibers:

According to Japanese estimates, ramie production in prewar China averaged 1.6 million tan [about 80 million kilograms] annually, of which about one fourth was exported. World markets for ramie were almost completely supplied by China. Production was greatly reduced by 8 years of war, but since liberation ramie production has rapidly expanded.

Before the war, the hemp output was about 1-1.3 million tan [50-65 million kilograms] annually, with a small amount exported. Northeast and North China hemp was exported from Tientsin, while that from Chekiang was exported from Shanghai.

Much flax is cultivated in the Northeast and Northwest, but it is used mainly for its oil seeds. After liberation, flax was extensively cultivated in the Northeast, and in 1950, flax fiber output reached 83,000 tan [about 4,150,000 kilograms]. In the future, with the liberation of Taiwan, flax production will be further developed.

Although jute and ambari are two different crops, their fiber characteristics and uses are very similar. For this reason the production of ambari is usually calculated with that of jute. The history of ambari in China is very short, but its usefulness, yields and prices are so good that its cultivation is fairly widespread.

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Prior to the war, the annual production of abutilon was 600,000-900,000 tan [about 30-45 million kilograms], with approximately 100,000 tan [about 5 million kilograms] exported. Tientsin was the largest port for the export of abutilon, with 60-80 percent of the yields of the Northeast and Northwest shipped through this port. In the past, Japan was the largest importer of abutilon, but there were also shipments going to Germany, France, and the US. Because abutilon may be combined with jute in manufacturing, the government is increasing its production.

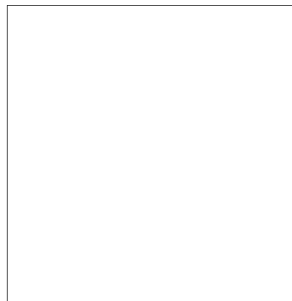
With the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the cultivation of agricultural products for industrial use has developed rapidly. For example, national grain production in 1950 was 16 percent higher than in 1949, and 87 percent of the average annual production before the war. The 1951 grain total was 7 percent more than the 1950 production, and 93 percent of the prewar average. Cotton production in 1950 increased 60 percent over 1949, and was 84 percent of the prewar average annual production. By 1951, cotton production was 58 percent over that of 1950 and 133 percent of the prewar average.

There was also a rapid development in the cultivation of fiber crops. In 1949, fiber production was only 13 percent of the highest production year (1938). But with the establishment of the new government, the old fiber-growing regions were revitalized and new areas developed. For example, in Chekiang over 798,000 tan [about 39.9 million kilograms] of jute (includes ambar) were produced in 1950, a 290 percent increase over 1949, and the 1951 production was 70 percent higher than that of 1950. Fiber production during 1950 was 80 percent of the highest production mark, and by 1951 production was 304 percent of the highest level.

In 2 years, many successes have been obtained in China. In 1950, the output of yarn and cloth was already 99.5 percent of the highest prewar level, and the 1951 production exceeded that of 1950 by 33 percent. On the industrial front, the 1950 production of steel, electrical power, etc. was more than ten times that of 1949. Foreign trade in 1950 exceeded previous marks by 9.34 percent.

The need for fibers will increase along with the industrial development of China. As industry grows and mechanized equipment is provided for the farmers, agriculture will make still greater achievements, including expansion of the fiber industry.

[Table showing geographical distribution of fiber crops follows:]



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Distribution of Fiber Crops

(Numbers in parentheses indicate rank in terms of volume of production. All numbered provinces produce over 100,000 tan [about 5 million kilograms] of fiber.)

<u>Area</u>	<u>Ramie</u>	<u>Flax</u>	<u>Hemp</u>	<u>Jute</u>	<u>Ambery</u>	<u>Abutilon</u>
Northeast		Jehol Liaotung Liaosi (3) Kirin (2) Sungkiang (1) Heilungkiang (4) Inner Mongolia	Mukden Jehol Liaotung Liaosi (2) Kirin (5) Sungkiang (4) Heilungkiang Inner Mongolia		Mukden Jehol Liaotung (1) Liaosi (2) Kirin Sungkiang Inner Mongolia	Mukden Jehol Liaotung Liaosi Kirin Sungkiang Heilungkiang Inner Mongolia
North China		Suiyuan Chahar	Suiyuan Chahar Shansi Hopeh		Hopeh	(1) Hopeh
Northwest	Shensi	Kansu	Tsinghai Ningsia Kansu Shensi			
East China	Kiangsu Anhwei Chekiang Fukien Taiwan	Taiwan	(2) Shantung Kiangsu (1) Anhwei Chekiang	Kiangsu Anhwei (1) Chekiang Fukien (2) Taiwan	(3) Shantung Chekiang Taiwan	(2) Shantung Kiangsu Anhwei

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Central South	Honan (2) Hupeh (1) Kiangsi (3) Hunan Kwangsi Kwangtung	Honan	Kiangsi Kwangsi Kwangtung	Honan
Southwest	Yunnan Kweichow Szechwan	Kweichow	Szechwan	

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