

CLASSIFICATION **CONFIDENTIAL**  
 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY REPORT  
 INFORMATION FROM FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS CD NO.



50X1-HUM

COUNTRY North Korea DATE OF INFORMATION 1949  
 SUBJECT Economic DATE DIST. 25 Oct 1949  
 HOW PUBLISHED Monthly periodical  
 WHERE PUBLISHED Pyongyang NO. OF PAGES 2  
 DATE PUBLISHED 1 Apr 1949 SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.  
 LANGUAGE Korean

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SOURCE Minja Sangop.

STATE MANAGEMENT OF THE GINSENG INDUSTRY

The government of the People's Republic saw the importance of the ginseng cultivation as well as its future, and on 16 October 1948 issued Cabinet Decision No 32 pertaining to the development of ginseng industry in North Korea. This decision provides that:

1. Ginseng cultivation rights of those sympathetic toward South Korea or those who rely heavily upon the government for subsidy will be revoked and their property confiscated.
2. The government shall grant as much as one-half of the total required capital to individual ginseng growers as an advance loan.
3. All private ginseng associations shall be dissolved in favor of the Public Ginseng Administration Office.
4. Ginseng nursery shall be under state management. There shall be a ginseng 5-year plan.
5. All facilities needed in ginseng cultivation shall be provided by the National Planning Committee. The capital needed by the ginseng growers shall be supplied by the Ministry of Finance. Each Provincial People's Committee shall assume the responsibility of providing sufficient acreage for the ginseng growers.

All of Korea is suitable for ginseng cultivation except Hamgyong Namdo, Hamgyong Pukto, and Pyongan Pukto. The area planted in ginseng prior to the liberation was 500,000 pyong (one Pyong equals 3.95 square yards) for all Korea, but division along the 38th Parallel gave South Korea two thirds.

It takes 6 years for ginseng to mature from seed to harvest crop, and the field from which it was harvested must be left idle for 15 years before planting again.

Kaesong is known as the home of ginseng. As the ginseng industry grew bigger, the ginseng fields have been expanded from Kaesong to Hwangju, north of the 38th Parallel. A considerable amount of ginseng was produced from Hwangju fields, but

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for processing all of it had to be sent to Kaesong where the processing facilities are. In 1946, 60 ginseng-processing technicians were brought to Hwangju from Kaesong to process ginseng, and by 1948 only four of them remained in Hwangju.

Now, however, there are enough ginseng technicians in North Korea, and the area planted in ginseng in 1949 is expected to be about 70,000 pyong. We are now independent in the ginseng industry.

Nationalization of the ginseng industry was a matter of great necessity if the ginseng industry was to succeed because it takes many years to harvest the ginseng, and annual investment is necessary. For example, if ginseng is planted in an area 1,000 pyong, it will require a capital of more than 700,000 won. That is why only 11 of the 50 ginseng growers in South Korea's ginseng history were successful.

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- 2 -

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