

## China's wild plant species could provide global resilience to climate change

A team from the University of Birmingham in the U.K., and partners in China, have identified 871 wild plant species native to China that have the potential to adapt and maintain 28 globally important crops.

The study was done in response to questions on how the world's food supply can or will respond to climate change.

The crops include rice, wheat, soybean, sorghum, banana, apple, citrus fruits, grape, stone fruits and millet. Forty-two percent of these wild plant species occur nowhere else in the world.

Having the ability to adapt, plants in their native habitats tend to have far more genetic diversity than farm crops, which are often clones and genetically homogeneous. Because of their diversity, varieties tend to be more resistant to disease, drought and swings in temperature.

Scientists are splicing genes from identified Chinese wild varieties to strengthen farm-crop strains. *Oryza rufipogon*, a wild relative of rice, is used to confer tolerance to drought and aluminium toxicity; *Glycine soja*, has been tapped to improve protein content in soybean; and *Vitis amurensis*, a wild relative of grape, improves cold tolerance.

**Read full original article:** [China's Plant Diversity Critical to Global Food Supply](#)