

which is earlier than the standards 'Leskovačka' and 'Vranjska'. It exhibits good graft compatibility with quince rootstocks.

The new hybrid cultivar 'I/25' was derived from a cross of 'Leskovačka' × 'Ceska' made in 1969. It is similar in most respects to 'Moravica' but has more pronounced stamens and flowers mid-season rather than early; it is also self-fertile. The fruit are medium to large, averaging 240 g, long, oval with an uneven surface; the skin is smooth, tender, uniform lemon yellow and pubescent. The flesh is creamy yellow, firm, medium compact, crispy, fine grained and suitable for fresh use. 'I/25' is harvested in mid-October (the same period as 'Leskovačka') and keeps until the end of March or longer with no tissue browning, and thus has the longest storage life of known quinces. It exhibits good compatibility with quince rootstocks. However, its late leaf fall means that it can suffer frost damage.

Tony Webster

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Docynia indica docynia

Docynia, *Docynia indica* (Well.) Decne (*Rosaceae*), is native to South-east Asia, from Vietnam through India and north into central China. While generally referred to as docynia in English, there are common names that translate to 'tong', 'thunghurpu' and 'mel' in English.

This evergreen tree has been variously classified with the pear (*Pyrus* sp.), apple (*Malus* sp.) and true quince (*Cydonia* sp.). *Docynia* is widely tolerant of soil types but is generally most productive in well-drained soils with full sunlight and adequate soil moisture. However, it has been recommended in Thailand for reclamation of sites with shallow soil, minimal soil moisture and that are dry late in the season.

The flowers are insect pollinated and hermaphroditic. The 5 cm fruit are generally harvested and eaten when half ripe. The fruit in many ways is comparable to the true quince in that it is often consumed in combination with other fruit and can be combined with persimmon (*Diospyros* sp.).

Docynia has been tried as a rootstock for apples (*Malus* sp.) and pears (*Pyrus* sp.). The success on these intergeneric combinations was about 70%, which demonstrated these combinations were possible, but not ideal, and their long-term success was not reported.

Chad Finn

Eriobotrya japonica loquat

History and origins

Loquat, *Eriobotrya japonica* Lindl. (*Rosaceae*, subfamily *Maloideae*), is a subtropical evergreen tree ($2n = 34$) that blooms in autumn and early winter. The tree is cold hardy to -10°C but fruit are frozen by winter minimums of about -3°C . The tree has ornamental uses and may be grown for its handsome foliage in areas where fruiting is irregular.

Records of loquat in China span over 2000 years. The loquat cultivated in Japan was introduced from China in ancient times and loquat cultivation in Japan was described as early as 1180. People beyond eastern Asia first learned of the loquat from Kaempfer, who observed it in Japan and described it in *Amoenites Exotica* in 1712. In 1784, the loquat was introduced from Guangdong into the National Garden at Paris, and in 1787 was introduced into the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, London. From this beginning, loquat was distributed around the Mediterranean to various countries, including Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Israel, Italy, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey. Sometime between 1867 and 1870, loquat was introduced to Florida from Europe and to California from Japan. Chinese immigrants are assumed to have carried the loquat to Hawaii. Cultivation spread to India and South-east Asia, the East Indies, Australia, New Zealand, Madagascar and South Africa. Loquats are now distributed in many Asian countries, for example, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, South Korea and Vietnam; in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia; and in the Americas, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, the mountains of Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico and Venezuela. Generally, loquats are found between latitudes 20° and 35° north and south but can be cultivated up to latitude 45° under marine climates.

Many loquat species occur in the wild state in China. However, because Japan had been considered the original