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The Tse Li, Tsu Li Dilemma

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Abstract

An Asian pear called 'Tsu li' in the United States has a pyriform shape and prominent lenticels. In China this pear is pronounced as "Tse li" with a short vowel sound. The Chinese have another high quality pear, more obtuse to ovate in shape than "Tse li", and with less prominent lenticels. This pear is called "Tsu li". We are requesting scionwood of Chinese "Tsu li" be sent to the United States. We need to use the spelling "Tse li" for the pear that we have so that "Tsu li" can refer to the Chinese "Tsu li".

For many years an Asian pear *Pyrus x bretschneider* Rehder, which has been called 'Tsu li', has been cultivated in the United States. This pear features a prominently lenticelled skin with a green, ripening to yellow, ground color. The calyx can be persistent in some environments with russetting occurring down the fruit from the pedicel end. The pedicel is offset. The shape of the fruit is pyriform with no distinct neck, similar to 5.6 in the IBPCR Pear Descriptor Table of Fruit Shape (2). The fruit is mounded around the pedicel in the same fashion as 'Ya li'.

Several pear researchers and enthusiasts who have recently traveled to China have reported that the "Tsu li"

they ate in China did not resemble the cultivar which we call "Tsu li" in the United States. Professor Shen Dexu of the Department of Horticulture at Zhejiang Agricultural University, Hangzhou, visited in the United States this past fall and helped to clarify the "Tsu li" dilemma. Apparently, transliterating the Chinese pronunciation and characters into English has caused some difficulty because of short and long vowel sounds. The Chinese have two cultivated pears with similar sounding names, Ts'u li (花梨) and Tsu li (西木梨). Drawings of these pears are presented in "The Variety and Distribution of Pears in China" (1). The large-lenticelled pear (Fig. 1) that we have been growing in the United States as Tsu li is pronounced with a short vowel sound. The word in Chinese sounds like a "TS" followed by an "E" as pronounced in the word "self." The "Tse" syllable is short; and spoken quickly. The pear with the short vowel sound originates from Laiyang, Shandong Province (Table 1). The "Tsu li" pear with the long vowel sound (Fig.

Table 1. Names and origins of Tse li and Tsu li pears.

Chinese	English	Origin Province	Features
花梨	Tse li or Ts'u li	Laiyang, Shandong	Pyriform with prominent lenticles
西木梨	Tsu li or Su li	Dangshan, Jiangsu	Ovoid with less prominent lenticles

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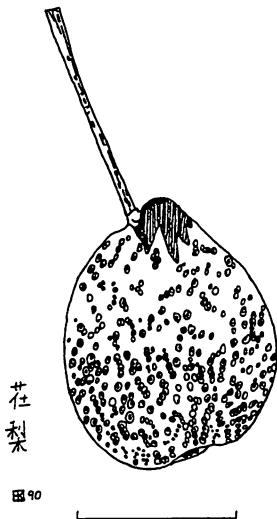


Figure 1. *Pyrus x bredschnederi* cultivar, pronounced with a short vowel sound and spelled either 'Tse Li' or 'Ts'u Li.' The bar represents 5 cm.

2) originates from Dangshan, Jiangsu Province. It has larger fruit and a more ovoid shape similar to 1.5 in the IBPGR descriptor table (2). We in the National Clonal Germplasm Repository know of no present U.S. domestic source for the Chinese 'Tsu li.' We have requested scionwood of the Chinese 'Tsu li' be sent to the National Plant Quarantine Center in Glenn Dale, Maryland for later inclusion in the collection at the national Clonal Germ-

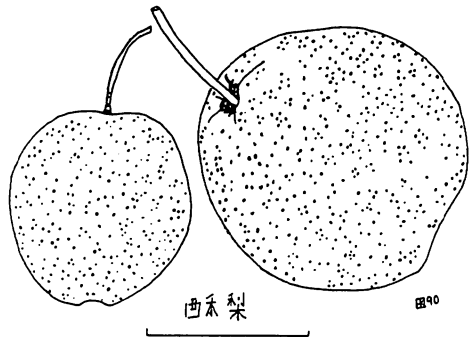


Figure 2. *Pyrus x bredschnederi* cultivar, pronounced with a long vowel sound, Tsū Li. The bar represents 5 cm. After (Hu, 1937) Tsing Su Li.

plasm Repository at Corvallis so that this cultivar can be enjoyed in the West as well.

Researchers and growers in the United States should be aware that the prominently lenticelled pear now called 'Tsu li' in America should be pronounced with a short vowel sound as in Tse li or Tsu li. The spelling, 'Tse li,' would be appropriate for this pear so that 'Tsu li' can refer to the soon to be acquired Chinese cultivar.

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NC-140 Regional Rootstock Planting

Fruit Varieties Journal October 1991, Volume 45, Number 4, is devoted to the report of the NC-140 Regional Rootstock planting of 1980-81. This planting was the first cooperative planting involving 22 states and 2 provinces of Canada. The scion variety was Starkspur Supreme and rootstocks utilized in the planting included M.9 EMLA, Ottawa 3, MAC 9 (Mark), OAR 1, M.27 EMLA and others. The single issue is available from the American Pomological Society, 103 Tyson Building, University Park, PA 16802. Make checks payable in U.S. funds to American Pomological Society. The cost of the single issue is \$7.00