
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Senator Akilah Weber Pierson, Chair

BILL NO: ACR 1
AUTHOR: Quirk-Silva and Mark González
VERSION: December 2, 2024
HEARING DATE: June 3, 2026
CONSULTANT: Margarita Niemann

SUBJECT: K-Ginseng Day

SUMMARY: Proclaims October 23, 2025, and the same date each year thereafter, as K-Ginseng Day in the state.

This resolution:

- 1) Makes the following declarations:
 - a) Ginseng’s history is deeply intertwined with ancient Korean medical traditions where it was first documented in medical texts over two millennia ago and recognized as a key component in restoring and maintaining the body’s balance;
 - b) Asian ginseng is native to East Asia, including China, Japan, and Korea, and has been used for health-related purposes in traditional medicine for thousands of years. Korean ginseng is also called “insam”;
 - c) The Korean Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the Korea Ginseng Association designated October 23 as Ginseng Day in 2016, and ginseng festivals are held yearly in Geumsan, Ganghwa, and Punggi, which are representative ginseng regions;
 - d) Korean red ginseng is especially recognized for its superior quality and effectiveness, representing the legacy of herbal wellness traditions passed down through generations and symbolizing vitality and holistic wellness in modern life;
 - e) Korean red ginseng, originating from traditional herbal practices, was historically valued by royalty and scholars for its benefits in nourishing the body and enhancing cognitive functions, and is still regarded as an essential supplement for promoting health and longevity;
 - f) Among ginseng varieties, Korean red ginseng is steamed to concentrate its active ingredients and improve absorption, providing enhanced benefits for energy, immune health, heart function, and mental sharpness;
 - g) Today, Korean red ginseng is widely used across the world, offering a full range of benefits for overall health and well-being;
 - h) The effects of Korean red ginseng extend beyond physical health, offering benefits such as reducing fatigue, promoting emotional well-being, and enhancing mental clarity, which is crucial in today’s fast-paced society;
 - i) During challenging times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, many people have turned to natural remedies, such as Korean red ginseng, to address blood health, stress, fatigue, and immune health;
 - j) Incorporating Korean red ginseng into daily routines, along with exercise, a balanced diet, and other holistic practices, enhances natural energy, focus, and resilience, promoting a healthier lifestyle;
 - k) In addition to being a cultural and medicinal staple, Korean red ginseng’s integration into various forms from teas and soups to supplements and skincare has broadened its accessibility, allowing individuals to incorporate its benefits into their daily routines easily; and,

- 1) Individuals of all ages and backgrounds throughout California and beyond recognize Korean red ginseng for its ability to promote vitality and strengthen both the body and mind.
- 2) Resolves that the Legislature proclaims October 23, 2025, and the same date each year thereafter, as K-Ginseng Day in the State of California.
- 3) Resolves that the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

FISCAL EFFECT: This resolution is keyed non-fiscal.

PRIOR VOTES:

Assembly Floor:

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COMMENTS:

- 1) *Author's statement.* According to the author, K-Ginseng Day celebrates not just the health benefits of Korean ginseng, but the deep cultural ties between South Korea and the United States. By honoring this tradition, we recognize the contributions of Korean-Americans and promote a shared commitment to wellness and cultural appreciation within the State of California.
- 2) *Ginseng.* Ginseng is a perennial herb native to the Far East, including Korea, northeastern China, and far-eastern Siberia. According to a 2022 article titled, "Ancient herbal therapy: A brief history of *panax ginseng*" in the *Journal of Ginseng Research*, ginseng was discovered over 5,000 years ago in the mountains of Manchuria, China, with references to ginseng found in books dating back more than two millennia. In traditional Chinese medicine, ginseng is considered a cure for all ailments. The most widely used ginseng species worldwide are Korean ginseng, also referred to as *panax ginseng*, which is native to the Korean Peninsula and northern China; as well as American ginseng, or *panax quinquefolius*, which is native to the United States and Canada. Ginseng is largely divided into three types: fresh ginseng, red ginseng, and white ginseng. Red ginseng is only manufactured in Korea, so it is commonly referred to as Korean Red Ginseng. Red ginseng is produced from fresh ginseng by steaming it without peeling the roots and subsequently drying it. The South Korean Ministry of Food and Drug Safety, formerly known as the Korea Food & Drug Administration, recognizes red ginseng for its six health functions: improving immunity, improving fatigue, improving blood circulation, enhancing memory, antioxidation, and improving the health of post-menopausal women.

The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NIH) states that although the amount of research on Asian ginseng for various conditions has gradually increased over recent years, most of the clinical trials have been small, with fewer than 200 participants involved, and shorter than three months. Larger multicenter studies that last longer than three months are needed to improve the clinical evidence of Asian ginseng for different conditions. NIH outlined the following findings for studies regarding the health impacts of ginseng:

- a) A small amount of research suggests that Asian ginseng may improve cognitive function in middle-aged adults;

- b) A very small amount of preliminary research suggests that Asian ginseng extract may help reduce the risk of developing the flu, but not the severity or duration of symptoms;
- c) A 2023 review of 19 studies (2,413 participants) suggests that Asian ginseng alone may have a small beneficial effect on general fatigue not related to specific diseases; and that certain ginseng herbal formulas containing other ingredients may be beneficial for chronic fatigue, but not ginseng alone;
- d) A 2022 review of 20 studies (1,295 participants) found that Asian ginseng improved many cardiometabolic factors in people with prediabetes and diabetes, but research on the use of Asian ginseng for improving blood sugar control in those with diabetes is overall inconclusive and conflicting;
- e) Some research indicates that taking oral Asian ginseng seems to improve sexual function in those with erectile dysfunction;
- f) The majority of research shows that Asian ginseng does not improve athletic performance; and,
- g) Although there is interest in using Asian ginseng for many other conditions, including aging, asthma, and anxiety, there is not sufficient reliable information to show whether it may help treating any of these conditions.

NIH also highlights that some experts recommend against oral use of Asian ginseng for infants, children, and women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. One of the chemicals in ginseng has been found to cause birth defects in animals.

SUPPORT AND OPPOSITION:

Support: None received

Oppose: None received

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