

*Scripta Horticulturæ*

Number 18



# International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants

Ninth Edition

*A Publication of the International Society  
for Horticultural Science*

# INTERNATIONAL CODE OF NOMENCLATURE FOR CULTIVATED PLANTS

*(ICNCP or Cultivated Plant Code)*

incorporating the Rules and Recommendations  
for naming plants in cultivation

Ninth Edition

*Adopted by the International Union of Biological Sciences  
International Commission for the Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants*

Prepared and edited by

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Lettuce trial 2003. Credit: RHS / Jacquie Gray.



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## FOREWORD

This ninth edition of the *International Code for the Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants* replaces the eighth edition of the *Code* which was published in October 2009 as *Scripta Horticulturae* Number 10 and as *Regnum Vegetabile* Vol. 151.

This new edition derives from decisions taken at a meeting of the IUBS International Commission for the Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants held over 20–21 July 2013 in Beijing, China. Prior to this meeting requests for suggestions to amend the previous *Code* had been sought from all interested parties and some of these proposals were published in *Hanburyana* (Vol. 5, 2011, Vol. 6, 2012 and Vol.7, 2013). All the proposals that had been submitted were collated by Janet Cubey and forwarded to the Commission Members in advance of the meeting, so that those not able to attend could make their opinions known. Copies of the proposals were also circulated to all those attending the Sixth International Symposium on the Taxonomy of Cultivated Plants, which had been held on 15–19 July in Beijing, immediately prior to the Commission meeting. An open discussion on the proposals was held on the final day of the Symposium.

At the Commission meeting all the proposals to amend the *Code* were discussed and where appropriate were voted on by those present. The views of those members unable to attend, as well as opinions expressed by those attending the Symposium, were conveyed to the meeting. At the meeting in Beijing we also benefited from the attendance of three observers whose invited contributions were much appreciated. These were: Yolanda Herta (UPOV, Switzerland), Jean Maison (CPVO, France) and Natalie Iwanycki (Royal Botanical Gardens, Canada). At the conclusion of the meeting an Editorial Committee was appointed to carry out the editing of the *Code* and to arrange for its publication. The Editorial Committee consisted of Chris Brickell (Chairman), Crinan Alexander, John David, Marco Hoffman, Alan Leslie, Valéry Malécot and Xiaobai Jin, with Janet Cubey as Editorial Committee Secretary.

The Commission is very grateful to the Beijing Forestry University and the conveners of the Symposium, Qixiang Zhang and Xiaobai Jin, for providing facilities and hospitality for the Commission meeting.

Initial work on preparing the new edition was carried out at Wisley by Janet Cubey, John David, Alan Leslie and myself, using transcribed recordings taken at the meeting, as well as the notes taken by the Editorial Committee Secretary. Drafts were forwarded to other members of the Editorial Committee and following further discussion and debate a final version (together with a request for an additional vote on the provisions of Art. 34) was circulated to the full Commission membership for further comments and suggestions prior to publication. I would like to thank Xiaobai Jin in particular for

## Foreword

his meticulous attention to detail, which has been extremely helpful during the editorial process.

The Commission is indebted to the following individuals who submitted proposals and suggestions for the revision of this *Code*:

James Armitage (UK), Saskia Bodegom (Netherlands), Roger Cross (Australia), Janet Cubey (UK), Dawn Edwards (UK), Hiroyuki Iketani (Japan), Alan Leslie (UK), John McNeill (UK), Charles Nelson (UK), Richard Sanford (UK), Johan van Scheepen (Netherlands), Julian Shaw (UK), Roger Spencer (Australia), Xiaobai Jin (China), Adrian Young (UK).

I would like to express my gratitude to all these individuals, as well to those who took part in the Beijing Symposium discussions or have subsequently assisted us in preparing this new edition of the *Code*. Richard Sanford (RHS, Wisley) in particular has played a significant role in the preparation of this *Code*, notably in the preparation of both the Appendices and the Indexes. Janet Cubey and John David have both contributed significantly to ensuring the administration of the long editorial process was conducted efficiently and I am grateful to them for their efforts.

Since the last edition of the *Code* we have welcomed two new members: Dr Marco Hoffman, who joins us as the new Commission Secretary, and Janet Cubey, both of whom have already demonstrated their value to the Commission. Two members have stood down from the membership: Dr Wilbert Hetterscheid (our former Secretary) and Dr Niall Green. I am most grateful to them all for their contributions to the Commission.

This will be my last foreword as Chairman of the Commission and I would like to express my gratitude and warmest thanks to all the members of the Commission with whom I have worked over the years both in the preparation of the *Code* and promoting its application to cultivated plants worldwide.

Proposals to modify this *Code* will, when possible, be published in *Hanburyana* and included on the HORTAX website. They should be sent to The Chairman, The Editorial Committee, ICNCP, c/o RHS Garden Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB, UK or by email to [icncp@rhs.org.uk](mailto:icncp@rhs.org.uk).

Chris Brickell, Chairman, IUBS International Commission for the Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants and Chairman, Editorial Committee, ICNCP.



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## PREFACE

This ninth edition of this *Code* maintains the overall format and style of the eighth (2009) edition and whilst the general order of the Articles remains the same, some alteration to numbering within the Articles has been made to take into account the addition or removal of some provisions. A comparative key listing changes in numbering within the Rules, Notes, Recommendations and Divisions between the 2009 edition and the current edition is provided on page xii.

A comparative list of new provisions appearing in Divisions II–VI is also provided to indicate differences between the 2009 *Code* and this edition (page xv).

Whilst this *Code* is written in English, the Commission hopes that translations will be made available in other languages and scripts so that it may be more widely used in the naming of cultivated plants throughout the world. The Commission has continued to pay particular attention to differing linguistic customs, taking into account where possible the formation and use of words and terms in different parts of the world.

The Preamble outlines the justification for the publication of this *Code* and describes the way in which the various provisions operate. It will be noted that the Rules and Recommendations of this *Code* are also intended to apply to all organisms traditionally treated as plants, including all algae and fungi.

The Principles are essentially the same as in the 2009 *Code*. There are two changes. The first reflects the renaming of the former *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature* as the *International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi and plants*, whilst the second acknowledges the use of trade designations, although making it clear these are not regulated by this *Code*.

The following changes and amendments relating to the Rules and Recommendations for the categories cultivar, Group and grex have been introduced in this edition of the *Code*:

Exceptionally it will be permitted to publish the name for a new cultivar before the original individual has been propagated (Art. 2.3 Note 5).

Where a collective name has been given to a plant composed of different cultivars on a single rootstock, that name is to be treated as a trade designation (Art. 2.22 Note 7).

A distinction is made between graft-chimaeras and mutation-chimaeras (Art. 5.1 and 5.2).

A name which has to be adopted following its use in a grant from a statutory plant registration authority, and which replaces an earlier accepted name, is to be referred to

as the adopted name. The earlier accepted name becomes a synonym of the adopted name (Art. 11.3).

It is noted that rules employed by statutory registration authorities in considering the acceptability of epithets (or 'denominations') may differ from those in this *Code* (Art. 11.3 Note 1).

Further guidance is provided to make it clear that code form epithets are acceptable when they differ by only one character or numeral (Art. 21.25).

It is recommended that an epithet established in a non-Roman script should consist of no more than 30 characters when transliterated or transcribed (Rec. 21K).

It is recommended that epithets should not contain the epithet of a species from the genus in which the cultivar, Group or grex belongs (Rec. 21M).

It is recommended that where the original application of a cultivar epithet can no longer be ascertained, different lineages may be distinguished by appending a device such as the name of the originator of that lineage (Rec. 21N).

It is recommended that Series may be treated as Groups where appropriate, and where it does not cause confusion (Rec. 22B).

Publications relating to an ICRA Register or Checklist which have appeared only in electronic media, can be made nomenclaturally effective by the printing and deposit of two copies in a designated library (Rec. 25C).

The provision to permit the date of a published, but undated, trade catalogue to be established by subsequent research is extended to any publication (Art. 26.3).

It is recommended that when an epithet is derived from a different language to that of its publication the original word or phrase should be given at the time of establishment (Rec. 27D.3).

The decision taken by an ICRA in choosing between competing names for the same plant must be fixed by publication of that decision (Art. 29.2).

The translation of an epithet, and the treatment of that translation as a trade designation, is to be avoided if the translation replicates an existing epithet in the denomination class (Art. 32.1 Note 1).

It is noted that where different authors have used separate transcription systems, transcribed epithets may not be identical, even when based on the same original epithet (Rec. 34A.1).

It is recommended that reverse transcription should return words to their original form, irrespective of the demands of the transcription system used (Rec. 34A.2).

It is recommended that where a cultivar or grex name appears in a publication in a language that uses a non-alphabetic script different from that of its original publication, the original, or the Roman transcribed epithet, should be used whenever possible (Rec. 34A.3).

It is noted that this *Code* follows Kenkyusha's New Japanese–English Dictionary in using hyphens in transcribed epithets, contrary to the practice in the *ALA-LC Romanization Tables* (Rec. 34D.1 Note 2).

Where duplicates of nomenclatural standards have been prepared, and are separately filed, these may be referred to as duplicate standards (Div. V.1).

It is noted that the names of graft-chimaeric genera are governed entirely by this *Code*. As they do not have types there are no type specimens or nomenclatural standards (Div. V.1 Note 2).

In order to be effective the word standard (or a phrase such as nomenclatural standard or standard specimen) should be included in any statement where a standard is designated (Div. V Note 9).

The way in which dates are described have, as far as possible, been made consistent throughout the *Code*.

There are no new Divisions or Appendices in this *Code*. However, the content of many of these has been revised and edited to take account of recent changes. This affects in particular Appendix I (Directory of International Registration Authorities), Appendix III (Places maintaining nomenclatural standards), Appendix V (Special denomination classes) and Appendix X which has been expanded to include not only guidance on trade designations, but also advice on the handling of Series for cultivars.

The Glossary has also been considerably revised and edited to ensure consistency and relevance to the text of the *Code*.

Whilst codes of nomenclature should remain bastions of stability for naming of plants, they do need to be updated in line with developing trends and practices that occur in the disciplines they serve, as well as to reflect problems that have occurred in the operation and interpretation of their rules. Whilst it is to be hoped that this edition will serve the users of cultivated plants for some years to come, the Commission always welcomes further suggestions for its future development.

C.D. Brickell. On behalf of the IUBS International Commission for the Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants.

October, 2015

## COMPARISON BETWEEN THE 2009 CODE AND THIS EDITION

This key demonstrates how the various numbered Rules, Notes, Recommendations, and Divisions of the 2009 edition of this *Code* may be compared with the provisions of this edition. This does not necessarily indicate that the meanings or implications of the previous provisions remain unchanged.

2009	2016				
		2.20	2.20	8.4	8.3
Div II	Div II	2.21	2.21	8A.1	8A.1
1.1	1.1	2.22	2.22	9.1	9.1
1.2	1.3	2.23	2.23	9.1 Nt.1	9.1 Nt.1
1.3	1.4	3.1	3.1	9.2	9.2
1A.1	1A.1	3.2	3.2	10.1	10.1
2.1	2.1	3.3	3.3	10.1 Nt.1	10.1 Nt.1
2.1 Nt.1	2.1 Nt.1	3.3 Nt.1	3.3 Nt.1	11.1	11.1
2.2	2.2	3.3 Nt.2	3.3 Nt.2	11.2	11.3
2.2 Nt.2	2.2 Nt.2	3.4	3.4	11.2 Nt.1	13.2 Nt.1
2.2 Nt.3	2.2 Nt.3	3.5	3.5	11.3	11.4
2.2 Nt.4	2.2 Nt.4	4.1	4.1	11.4	11.5
2.3	2.3	4.1 Nt.1	4.1 Nt.1	11.5	11.6
2.4	2.5	4.1 Nt.2	4.1 Nt.2	11.6	11.7
2.5	2.6	4.2	4.2	11.7	11.8
2.6	2.7	4.3	4.3	11.8	11.9
2.7	2.8	4.4	4.4	12.1	12.1
2.8	2.9	5.1	5.1	13.1	13.1
2.9	2.10	6.1	6.1	13.2	13.2
2.10	2.11	6.2	6.2	13.2 Nt.1	13.2 Nt.2
2.11	2.11	6.2 Nt.1	6.2 Nt.1	14.1	14.1
2.12	2.12	6.3	6.3	14.1 Nt.1	14.1 Nt.1
2.13	2.13	6.4	6.4	14.1 Nt.2	14.1 Nt.2
2.14	2.14	6.5	6.5	14.2	14.2
2.15	2.15	7.1	7.1	14.3	14.3
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21.14	21.14	23.5 Nt.1	23.5 Nt.1	27C.1	27C.1
21.15	21.15	23.5 Nt.2	23.5 Nt.2	27D.1	27D.1
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## **NEW PROVISIONS**

The following are novel provisions appearing in Division II–VI of this edition.

### **ART**

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## IMPORTANT DATES IN THIS *CODE*

Dates upon which particular provisions of this *Code* become effective.

The Rules in this *Code* are retroactive, except in the following specified cases. The date on the left is that upon which each Rule becomes effective.

1 May 1753	Art. 18.1
	Art. 18.3
2 January 1858	Art. 18.2
1 January 1900	Art. 25.2
1 January 1953	Art. 25.3
	Div III, 13
1 January 1959	Art. 21.6
	Art. 21.7
	Art. 21.11
	Art. 21.16
	Art. 21.22
	Art. 21.24
	Art. 26.1
	Art. 27.1
1 January 1973	Art. 25.3
	Div III, 13
1 January 1996	Art. 21.13
	Art. 21.17
	Art. 21.18
	Art. 21.20
	Art. 21.23
1 January 2004	Art. 21.15
	Art. 22.6
	Div V, 5
	Div V, 6
1 January 2010	Art. 23.5

## PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF THIS CODE

1st	Published by the RHS as a booklet: 29 pp Stearn, W.T.	1953
2nd	<i>Regnum Vegetabile</i> <b>10</b> : 28 pp Fletcher, H.R., Gilmour, J.S.L., Lawrence, G.H.M., Little, Jr, E.L., Nilsson-Leissner, G. & de Vilmorin, R.	1958
3rd	<i>Regnum Vegetabile</i> <b>22</b> : 30 pp Fletcher, H.R., Gilmour, J.S.L., Lawrence, G.H.M., Matthews, J.D., Nilsson-Leissner, G. & de Vilmorin, R.	1961
4th	<i>Regnum Vegetabile</i> <b>64</b> : 32 pp Gilmour, J.S.L., Horne, F.R., Little Jr, E.L., Stafleu, F.A. & Richens, R.H.	1969
5th	<i>Regnum Vegetabile</i> <b>104</b> : 32 pp Brickell, C.D., Voss, E.G., Kelley, A.F., Schneider, F. & Richens, R.H.	1980
6th	<i>Regnum Vegetabile</i> <b>133</b> : 175 pp Trehane, P., Brickell, C.D., Baum, B.R., Hetterscheid, W.L.A., Leslie, A.C., McNeill, J., Spongberg, S.A. & Vrugtman, F.	1995
7th	<i>Acta Horticulturae</i> <b>647</b> : 123 pp <i>Regnum Vegetabile</i> <b>144</b> Brickell, C.D., Baum, B.R., Hetterscheid, W.L.A., Leslie, A.C., McNeill, J., Trehane, P., Vrugtman, F. & Wiersema, J.H.	2004
8th	<i>Scripta Horticulturae</i> <b>10</b> : 184 pp <i>Regnum Vegetabile</i> <b>151</b> Brickell, C.D., Alexander, C., David, J.C., Hetterscheid, W.L.A., Leslie, A.C., Malécot, V., Xiaobai, Jin & Cubey, J.J.	2009

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## INTERNATIONAL CODE OF NOMENCLATURE FOR CULTIVATED PLANTS

### PREAMBLE

1. The disciplines of agriculture, forestry, and horticulture require a precise, stable, and simple system of naming plants that can be applied internationally. This system must deal with both the terms that denote the various categories of taxonomically distinguishable groups of plants (taxa, plural; taxon, singular) in cultivation and the formation of names for such groups.

The purpose of giving a name to a taxon is to supply a means of referring to it and to indicate to which category it is assigned, rather than to indicate its characters or history.

This *Code* aims to provide a stable method of naming taxa of cultivated plants<sup>1</sup>, avoiding and rejecting the use of names that may cause error or ambiguity.

Next in importance is the maintenance of prevailing custom and the avoidance of the unnecessary creation of names. Other considerations, such as absolute grammatical correctness, regularity or euphony of epithets, regard for persons etc., notwithstanding their undeniable importance, are of less significance.

2. The Principles form the basis of the system in this *Code* for naming plants in cultivation.

3. The detailed provisions are divided into Rules, set out in the Articles, and Recommendations. Notes are provided to give ancillary information and Examples are added to the Rules and Recommendations to illustrate them.

4. The object of the Rules is to put names from the past in order and to provide for those of the future.

5. The Recommendations deal with subsidiary points, their object being to bring about greater uniformity and clarity, especially in future naming. Names contrary to a Recommendation may not, on that account, be rejected but, whenever possible, Recommendations should be followed.

6. The provisions regulating modification of this *Code* form its last Division.

7. The Rules and Recommendations apply to all organisms traditionally treated

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<sup>1</sup> These are deliberately selected plants that may have arisen by intentional or accidental hybridization in cultivation, by selection from existing cultivated stocks, or from variants within wild populations or from genetically modified plants.

as plants (including algae and fungi) and whose origin or selection is primarily due to intentional human activity.

8. The only proper reasons for changing a name of a taxon are either a more profound knowledge of the facts resulting from adequate taxonomic study or the necessity of giving up a name that is contrary to the Rules of the *ICN* and *ICNCP*.

9. In the absence of a relevant Rule or where the consequences of Rules are doubtful, established custom is followed.

10. For the purposes of this *Code* the verb “write” is to be construed as covering all methods of presenting a name, whether hand-written, printed or electronic.

11. Translations of this *Code* are encouraged. In the event of any discrepancy, the original English version is considered correct.

12. This edition of the *Code* supersedes all previous editions.

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## DIVISION I: PRINCIPLES

### PRINCIPLE 1

A precise, stable, and internationally recognized system for naming plants in cultivation is essential for international understanding and communication. The aim of this *Code*, the *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants (ICNCP)*, also known as the Cultivated Plant Code, is to promote uniformity, accuracy, and stability in the naming of agricultural, forestry, and horticultural plants.

### PRINCIPLE 2

The *International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants (ICN)* governs the names in Latin form for algae, fungi, and plants, except for graft-chimaeric genera, which are entirely governed by this *Code*.

Taxa of plants whose origin or selection is primarily due to intentional human activity may be given names formed according to the provisions of this *Code*. With the exception of any Latin component within their names, the form of which is governed by the *ICN*, the nomenclature of names in the categories of cultivar, Group, and grex<sup>1</sup> is governed by this *Code* alone.

### PRINCIPLE 3

The naming of taxa governed by this *Code* is based upon priority of publication. Each cultivar or Group with a particular circumscription and each grex with a particular parentage may bear only one accepted name: the earliest that is in accordance with the Rules, except as provided for within this *Code*.

### PRINCIPLE 4

Names of plants governed by this *Code* must be universally and freely available for use by any person<sup>2</sup> to denote a taxon.

### PRINCIPLE 5

This *Code* regulates the terminology to be used for categories of taxa governed by this *Code* and the names to be applied to those individual taxa.

Under some national and international legislation such as that providing for National Listing or Plant Breeders' Rights (Plant Variety Rights), names may be established for taxa of plants using terminology peculiar to such legislation. This *Code* does not

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<sup>1</sup> Plants of this type are sometimes referred to as cultigens

<sup>2</sup> In using the word "person" in this *Code* we are adopting the legal definition which covers both the individual and the corporate body.

regulate the use of such terminology, their rules, or the formation of such names but recognizes that, under such legislation, these names take precedence over names formed under the provisions of this *Code*.

#### **PRINCIPLE 6**

While the use of trade designations as marketing devices in addition to properly established names of taxa of plants is acknowledged in this *Code*, the formation of such designations is not regulated under this *Code*.

Plants are sometimes marketed using trademarks. Such trademarks are the intellectual property of an individual or corporate body and are not therefore freely available for any person to use; consequently, they cannot be considered as names as defined in this *Code*.

#### **PRINCIPLE 7**

The formation and use of common names of plants are not regulated by this *Code*.

#### **PRINCIPLE 8**

International registration of cultivar, Group, and grex names and the publication and promotion of lists of such names are of the greatest importance for promoting uniformity, accuracy, and stability in the naming of cultivated plants.

#### **PRINCIPLE 9**

The selection, preservation, and publication of designations of nomenclatural standards is important in stabilizing the application of cultivar and Group names. Particular names are attached to nomenclatural standards to make clear the precise application of the names and to help avoid duplication of such names. Although not a requirement for the establishment of a name, the designation of such standards is strongly encouraged.

#### **PRINCIPLE 10**

This *Code* has no force beyond that deriving from the free assent of those concerned with the naming of cultivated plants. However, the Rules and Recommendations of this *Code* should be endorsed and applied by all those responsible for the formation and use of names for cultivated plants.

#### **PRINCIPLE 11**

The provisions of this *Code* are retroactive unless stated otherwise.

## DIVISION II: RULES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### CHAPTER I: GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### ARTICLE 1: RELATIONSHIP WITH THE *INTERNATIONAL CODE OF NOMENCLATURE FOR ALGAE, FUNGI, AND PLANTS (ICN)*

1.1. Plants in cultivation may be named in accordance with the *International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants (ICN)* at least to the level of genus, or to the level of species or below.

1.2. Notwithstanding Art. 1.1, the names of graft-chimaeric genera are entirely governed by this *Code*.

1.3. Plants in cultivation meeting the criteria of being recognized in the categories of cultivar, Group, or grex may be given epithets in accordance with this *Code* and assigned to a named taxon under the *ICN* or a named graft-chimaeric genus under this *Code* (see also Art. 21.2, Art. 22.1, and Art. 23.1).

1.4. Hybrids between taxa, including, if it is so wished, those arising in cultivation, may receive names as provided in Appendix I of the *ICN* (“Names of hybrids”; see also Division III of this *Code*). Alternatively, or in addition, cultivated plants arising through hybridization may be named as cultivars, Groups, or grexes under the provisions of this *Code*.

*Ex. 1.* *Solanum* × *procurrens* is the name, under the *ICN*, for the hybrid between the European *S. nigrum* and the South American *S. physalifolium* that occurred on cultivated ground in the United Kingdom.

*Ex. 2.* *Hypericum* × *inodorum* is the name, under the *ICN*, for hybrids between *H. androsaemum* and *H. hircinum* that occur where the two species meet both in the wild and in cultivation. Cultivars and Groups may be assigned to this hybrid name if desired.

*Ex. 3.* *Lycaste* × *smeeana* (*L. deppei* × *L. skinneri*) is a naturally occurring hybrid; *Calanthe* × *domnyi* (*C. masuca* × *C. triplicata*) is a hybrid that arose in cultivation.

*Ex. 4.* The progeny of the repeated cross between *Victoria amazonica* and *V. cruziana* with *V. amazonica* as the pollen parent fit the criteria of cultivar (Art. 2.3) and have received the name *V.* ‘Longwood Hybrid’; likewise the progeny of the cross with *V. cruziana* as the pollen parent and which are consistently distinct from progeny of the former cross have been named *V.* ‘Adventure’ (see *Pond & Garden* 1(4): 20–23. 1999). These hybrids have not been named under the provisions of the *ICN*.

#### Recommendation 1A

1A.1. Plants in cultivation that meet the criteria of being recognized in the categories of cultivar, Group, or grex should be named in accordance with the provisions of this *Code*, not under the provisions of the *ICN*.

## INTERNATIONAL CODE OF NOMENCLATURE FOR CULTIVATED PLANTS – 2016

The international rules for naming  
agricultural, forestry, and horticultural plants  
for use by anyone concerned with  
the accurate naming of plants.

Containing 11 appendices and a comprehensive glossary  
to provide guidance for those needing  
to form and maintain the correct names of cultivated plants  
and covering topics such as trade designations,  
new cultivar names, and conserved and rejected epithets

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