

Preface

The fruit of *Lycium barbarum* (also called Wolfberry) is known to be anti-aging and nurtures the eyes or vision. It is an upper class Chinese medicine, meaning that it can be used as medicine for therapy as well as an ingredient in Chinese cuisine. Collective efforts from different research teams have proven that the fruits of *Lycium barbarum* have rich sources that protect our whole body, from the skin to the liver, brain and eyes. Therefore, regular consumption of *Lycium barbarum* can help us to keep the balance of Yin/Yang in our body to fight against any possible age-associated diseases.

There is a famous Chinese story related to *Lycium barbarum*. One day a young man was walking in a village. On his way, he found two people arguing with each other in a narrow lane. He went to see what had happened and found a relatively young and strong man with black hair arguing with a weak elder with grey hair. It looked like the elder had been blamed for something. In Chinese culture, we all have great respect for the elderly. This was why this young man did not feel quite right and thought that the man with black hair was not paying respect to his senior. He asked this weak elder with grey hair whether the black-haired man had done him some injustice. The grey-haired man then pointed to the strong black-haired man, saying, 'he is my big brother'. The strong black-haired big brother said that his little brother did not listen to him and take *Lycium barbarum*. This was why his little brother looked old and weak.

From this story, we have insight into the beneficial effects of *Lycium barbarum*. In this book, we have carefully arranged the content from the plant, the chemical components and the effects on different organs/biological systems as well as its potential harmful effects. Authors in every chapter used different scientific methods to prove the effects of *Lycium barbarum*. We are not just showing the benefits of *Lycium barbarum*. Some people may be allergic to *Lycium barbarum*. This book is the first book about *Lycium barbarum* written in English. As more people are searching for health food supplements and there are many so-called 'secrete formulations of herbs and health food supplements', we should look for some reliable health food with solid scientific evidence and be cautious of any possible deleterious effects. We hope that this book gives us a comprehensive understanding of the pros and cons of this anti-aging *Lycium barbarum*.

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