

# Where the wild veggies are: Cultivated cucumber and melon originated in Asia and Australia

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Sites of origin and regions of domestication of many of our most important cultivated plants are still unknown. The botanical genus *Cucumis*, to which both the cucumber (*Cucumis sativus*) and the honeydew melon (*C. melo*) belong, was long thought to have originated and diversified in Africa, because many wild species of *Cucumis* are found there.

"A molecular genetic analysis has now shown that the wild populations that gave rise to melons and cucumbers originated in Asia", says LMU botanist Professor Susanne Renner. "In addition, we have found that 25 related species which have never been formally described are found in Asia, Australia and regions around the Indian Ocean." Future genetic studies on

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