



NATIONAL FORESTS IN NORTH • CAROLINA

USDA FOREST SERVICE, 160A ZILICOA STREET, ASHEVILLE, NC 28801

NEWS • RELEASE

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Spring Harvesting of Galax to be Restricted

ASHEVILLE, N.C.-- The USDA Forest Service will place a restriction on the harvesting of galax during the spring growth period from May 1 through June 15, 2005.

New galax leaves sprout and put on new growth generally beginning in late April through June. The leaves during this time are tender and sensitive and of lower value due to smaller size and ease of damage in shipping. In addition, trampling of the tender leaves by harvesters walking through the galax beds during this sensitive time could be causing additional damage to unharvested leaves. Gathering galax at this time of year also hurts the galax industry by removing less than mature leaves before they reach optimum value (picking the apples before they are ripe) and may be damaging the galax beds.

The harvesting of galax will not be allowed on the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests during the spring growing season from May 1 to June 15. All permits sold after April 1 will expire April 30, 2005. Districts will not sell permits for harvesting galax until the end of the spring restriction period on June 15. Paul Bradley, Appalachian District Ranger in Burnsville, NC, said, "Communities in our area benefit from the collection of galax and other forest products. This restriction will not reduce the overall availability of galax to the industry - the galax not harvested during the spring restriction period will be there for harvest in late June and for the rest of the summer. And, they will be healthier and more valuable with the extra growing time."