

## What are the requirements to export wild American ginseng.

- CITES permits are required for export of American ginseng, and must be obtained from the FWS's Division of Management Authority (DMA).
- Complete and submit export application form 3-200-34 to DMA (download at: <http://www.fws.gov/forms/3-200-34.pdf>).
- Photocopies of your valid State ginseng dealer's permit or license, and of your valid U.S. Department of Agriculture General Permit must be submitted with your application.
- For the upcoming harvest season, applications for wild ginseng should be submitted to DMA no sooner than July 15th.
- Applications for wild ginseng from prior harvest seasons may be submitted at any time.
- Wild ginseng collected in different harvest seasons require separate CITES exports permits issued specific to the season that the ginseng was collected in.
- Allow DMA 60 days to process your application.
- A complete original CITES export permit plus two complete copies of that permit, a complete Wild Ginseng Export Report, the original State Certificates, and a shipper's invoice are all required at the time of export. CITES export permits are valid for six months.
- For more information, contact DMA at: phone: 1-800-358-2104 or 1-703-358-2104; Fax: 1-703-358-2281; E-mail: [management\\_authority@fws.gov](mailto:management_authority@fws.gov)  
-Internet: <http://www.fws.gov/permits>  
[management\\_authority@fws.gov](mailto:management_authority@fws.gov)

The information presented here does not replace the actual State laws that govern the harvest and sale of ginseng. Make sure you know and follow all State laws and regulations where you harvest ginseng.

### GOOD STEWARDSHIP CHECKLIST

When harvesting wild American ginseng, make sure you follow all of these good stewardship practices:

- Get permission to harvest.
- Harvest only mature (3- and 4-prong) plants that are at least 5 years old.
- Dig only plants with red fruit.
- Plant seeds under  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch of soil.
- Leave some mature plants for the future.

Information Provided By



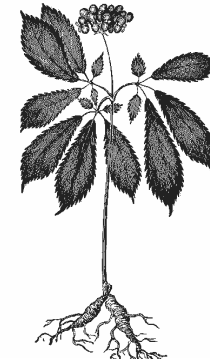
(301) 588-1171 ♦ [ahpa@ahpa.org](mailto:ahpa@ahpa.org)



<http://www.fws.gov/international/animals/ginindx.html>

Download State info brochures at:  
<http://www.ahpa.org/Default.aspx?tabid=154>

© Sept. 2006 May be reprinted with attribution.



## GOOD STEWARDSHIP HARVESTING OF WILD AMERICAN GINSENG (*Panax quinquefolius*)

American ginseng is a long-lived perennial plant that grows in woodlands throughout the mountain areas of the Eastern United States and Canada. Plants come up in early spring; produce small greenish-yellow flowers and green fruit in mid-summer, which later mature to bright red. Plants die back in the fall.

American ginseng roots have been traded continuously in international commerce since the beginning of the 18th Century. The biggest market has always been in Asian countries, where over 30 tons of wild American ginseng are exported every year.

American ginseng has been protected since 1975 under an international treaty known as CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), which requires its export to be regulated by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS). FWS must ensure that exported wild ginseng is harvested in a manner that is both legal and not detrimental to the survival of the species.

The stewardship practices presented in this brochure are provided to encourage people who dig wild American ginseng to act as stewards of the species and of its habitat. By following these guidelines, you are contributing to and protecting a sustainable future for wild American ginseng, and preserving a longstanding American tradition.

## **Stewardship Harvesting of Wild American Ginseng**

**There are a number of harvest practices that must be followed for a collector to be a ginseng steward:**

### **GET PERMISSION TO HARVEST**

Whether you are on private or public land, always get permission before digging ginseng. Some U.S. National Forests and State-owned lands will allow harvest of ginseng, but require you to obtain a permit. Harvest is not allowed in any National Park.

When digging on public land, always obtain required permits and comply with all rules. When digging on private property, get the permission of the landowner or his/her agent. Also, report any signs of property damage, habitat loss, or trespassing to the landowner.

### **RESPECT AMERICAN GINSENG'S LIFE CYCLE**

American ginseng's lifecycle, as shown, illustrates the life stages of the plant. Seedlings have only 1 prong (leaf), which usually has 3 leaflets. The next phase has 2 prongs, with 3 or 5 leaflets per leaf. Mature plants have 3 or 4 prongs, each with 5 leaflets.

Researchers have estimated that each ginseng plant in the wild needs to produce over 30 seeds to replace each plant harvested. Never harvest seedling (1-prong) or juvenile (2-prong) plants, or plants that are less than 5 years old with at least 4 "bud scars" on the "neck" at the top of the root. Roots from younger plants are not allowed to be exported and many ginseng buyers won't buy these small roots, so it'd best to leave these plants in the woods for future harvest.

### **DIG SOME, LEAVE SOME**

Good stewardship requires diggers to leave enough plants so that populations continue to be healthy and plentiful. Always leave some mature plants in every ginseng patch where you dig.

### **HARVEST ONLY IN THE HARVEST SEASON**

The harvest season for wild ginseng varies by State. Make sure you know the legal State harvest season where you dig ginseng, and always comply with the State rules.

Never harvest plants before the fruit is ripe (red).

This is a requirement in most States, and is an essential good stewardship practice.

### **PLANT RIPE FRUIT!!!**

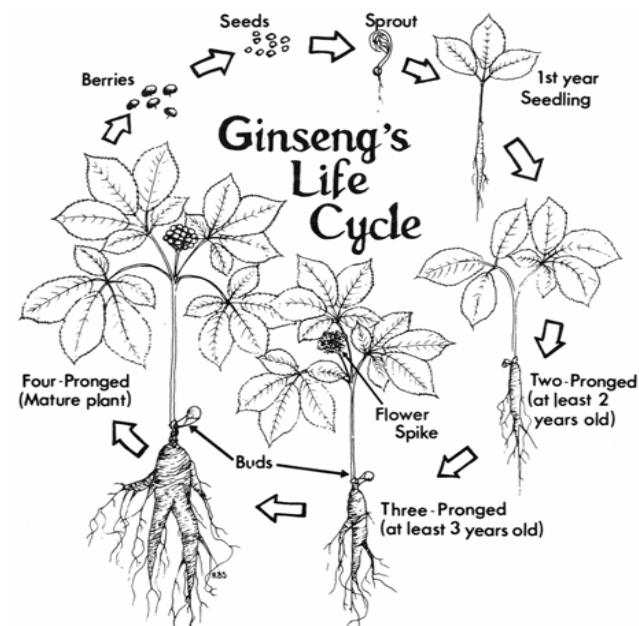
Experienced harvesters know to plant ginseng's red ripe berries as they dig for roots. This stewardship practice may explain why ginseng is still in the woods after three centuries of digging.

The best practice is to plant the ripe berries under  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch of soil. Researchers have found that planting the ripe seeds at this depth can produce up to 8 times more seedlings!

### **PROTECT AMERICAN GINSENG'S HABITAT**

Stewards of wild ginseng must care for the plants, as well as its native habitat.

Be aware of land-use and zoning activities in your community and join with local organizations to make your voice heard. Though landowners' property rights should be respected, make sure they are aware of the value of ginseng and other non-timber plants on their land.



Drawing from: WS Persons and JM Davis. *Growing & Marketing Ginseng, Goldenseal & Other Woodland Medicinals.* Bright Mountain Books, 206 Riva Ridge/Fairview NC 28730. ©2005. Used with permission.

### **OTHER STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES**

Every ginseng steward should be aware of other stewardship practices, such as:

- Record the number of plants in patches or populations before digging the roots, to see if the number of plants decrease, increase, or stay the same next year. Each year record your observation and any changes to the population.
- After you dig some of the mature plants in a ginseng patch, and have planted all of the red fruits, break the stems off of any remaining plants so that other diggers don't take more roots from the same patch.