



FACT SHEET

American Ginseng

(Panax quinquefolius)

Common Name

American Ginseng, Seng

Plant

Long-lived perennial (50 years +) characterized by three to five palmately compound leaves (prongs). Mature plants have a multi-forked taproot that is sold as a medicinal root primarily within East Asia.

Flowers

Terminal umbel with tiny white flowers May to June, red fruits mature in late August to early September.



Global Range

Broadly distributed in Eastern North America from Quebec province to Minnesota and south to Georgia and Oklahoma. NC Range: Primarily occurring in the mountains, with scattered populations in the western piedmont plus a few in the coastal plain. Habitat: Prefers mesic hardwood forest, primarily rich cove forest.

Southern Appalachian Harvest

Collected as medicinal crop for more than two centuries. Harvest rates within western North Carolina varying from 6000 to 10,000 dried lbs annually for the past 20 years. Ginseng roots are harvested on all ranger districts with greater intensity on the Nantahala and Appalachian Ranger Districts. Permits have been issued annually for the last several years.

Permit

Issued from September 1 through September 30. Cost is \$40/ wet lb. Minimum permit one wet lb. Limit of 3 lb. collection annually. Harvest prohibited in Wilderness and Natural Areas.

Regulatory Agency

American ginseng is on Appendix II list of the Convention of International Trade of Endangered Species. The Division of Scientific Authority, US Fish & Wildlife Service is the regulatory agency that evaluates the biological and management status of wild American ginseng throughout its native range. The Division issues an annual or biennial report detailing if any harvest conditions need to be modified to ensure the sustainable harvest of wild native ginseng.

For More Information

For more information about the national forests in North Carolina, visit www.fs.usda.gov/nfsnc.