



Morels

Morels have been called by many local names; some of the more colorful include **dryland fish**, because when sliced lengthwise then breaded and fried, their outline resembles the shape of a fish; **hickory chickens**, as they are known in many parts of Kentucky; and **merkels** or **miracles**, based on a story of how a mountain family was saved from starvation by eating morels. In parts of West Virginia, they are known as "molly moochers." Other common names for morels include **sponge mushroom**. Genus *Morchella* is derived from *morchel*, an old German word for mushroom, while *morel* itself is derived from the Latin *maurus* meaning *brown*.



Association with wildfire

All types of morels may grow abundantly in forests which have been burned by a forest fire, with black morels at the start of the season, followed by the yellows, greys and greens. The mechanism for this behavior is not well known, but appears to be related to both the death of trees and the removal of organic material on

the forest floor.- Moderate-intensity fires are reported to produce higher abundances of morels than low or high intensities. Where fire suppression is practiced morels often grow in small amounts in the same spot year after year. If these areas are overrun by wildfire they often produce a bumper crop of black morels the following spring. Commercial pickers and buyers in North America target recently burned areas for this reason.



Permits are available for harvesting mushrooms

Free use permits are available on all Districts. Mushrooms are for personal use and may not be sold.

Commercial or charge permits are available only from Med Bow Districts and are for the Med Bow NF only. Minimum charge is \$20.00. Cost per pound is \$0.40 with a maximum per permit of 50 pounds which equals a cost of \$20.00. Commercial permits expire 7 days after issue.

There are no load tickets for these permits. The permit is the load ticket and needs to be with the permit holder when they are collecting.

Your permit shall be carried at all times when collecting and must be shown upon request to a Forest Service Officer. Non-compliance with the conditions of this permit may result in a

penalty. This sale is final and not subject to refund, nor is the permit transferable.

Harvesting of mushrooms is prohibited in any Wilderness Area, Research Natural Area, or Special Interest Area. It is the permittee's responsibility to ensure they are not in a restricted area. Violators will be cited.

Harvesting is not permitted within 100 feet of any open Forest road and 500 feet from the Snowy Range Scenic Byway (Hwy 130, WY) and /or the Battle Highway (Hwy 70, WY).

Harvesting is not permitted within 100 feet of developed areas including campgrounds, picnic grounds and recreational residences.

- ✚ *Cut or break the mushroom off at ground level. Raking or other ground disturbing activities when collecting mushrooms is prohibited.*



Personal Use Mushroom Permit Terms and Conditions

Personal use permit are valid through December 31, of the year of issue.

Each individual or household is allowed 1 gallon per day up to 5 gallons per calendar year. 1 gallon of mushrooms is approximately 5 pounds.

Mushrooms must be cut in half at the time of harvest and cannot be sold.



Commercial Use Mushroom Permit Terms and Conditions

Commercial Harvesting is not permitted anywhere on the Routt National Forest. Commercial Permits are only valid on the Medicine Bow National Forest.

All harvesters over the age of 12 will be required to hold an individual permit. Parent or guardian's name will be included on the minor's permit. If harvesters are under the age of 18, permit must be kept with the parent/legal guardian while collecting and transporting mushrooms.

Each commercial permit is valid for the collection of up to 50 pounds of mushrooms **(approximately 10 gallons) in one 7 day period.** Permit expires 7 days from the date of issue. Individuals will be permitted to purchase up to 5 charge mushrooms permits per calendar year.

Harvesters will conduct themselves with civility at ALL times. Conflicts with other mushrooms harvesters, territorial actions and other disruptive behavior will result in the loss of this permit.



How to Store Mushrooms

Store mushrooms in a paper bag in the refrigerator or wrapped in paper towels and then loosely wrapped with plastic. Enclosing mushrooms in a plastic bag will make them sweat and spoil more quickly. Wild mushrooms will last for a few days stored this way; cultivated mushrooms will last up to a week or two.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE –
FOREST SERVICE**

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

Medicine Bow – Routt National Forests

DOUGLAS RANGER DISTRICT



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Mushroom Harvesting

Mushrooms are edible fungi full of deep woody flavor that add depth and heartiness to dishes. There are untold varieties of edible mushrooms, but as different as their flavors are they can be treated and used in much the same way.

