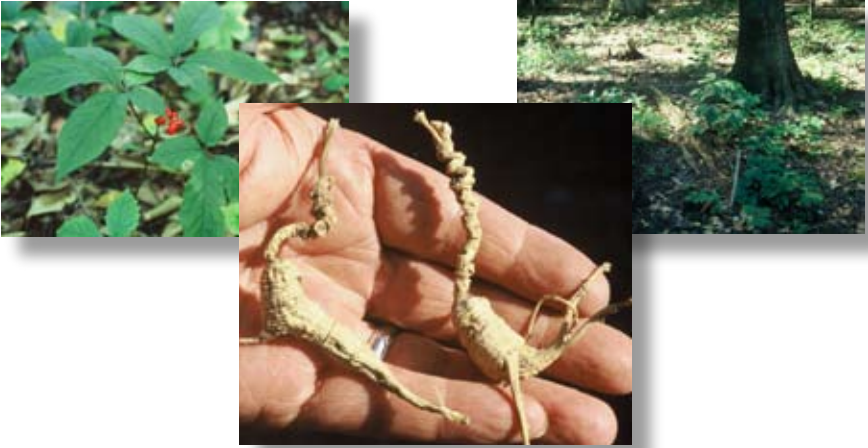


Ohio's Green GOLD



AMERICAN GINSENG

Life History

American ginseng is a slow-growing perennial herb. It reaches a typical height of 8 to 15 inches. Ginseng prefers mature woodlands, frequently on slopes, where it favors rich soil and dense shade. American ginseng occurs from Quebec, Canada, west to Minnesota and south to Georgia and Oklahoma.

Plants produce flowers during June and July. These flowers develop into green fruits. In August and September, the fruit ripens into bright crimson berries and drop. Each berry contains two to three seeds. Seed germination takes place in 18-22 months. Seedlings normally appear in May and during their first year have only one small leaf comprised of three leaflets. During the

second growing season, the plant will develop a central stem with one compound leaf comprised of three to four leaflets. With each growing season, the plants will continue to add leaves and leaflets.

The size of the plant, number of leaves, and number of flowers increases with the age of the plant. The development of additional leaves and flowers is not annual. The rate of growth is controlled by soil conditions, available light, seasonal weather variations and damage by humans and animals. The life expectancy of ginseng is uncertain, but 20-75 years is considered probable. After about 18-20 years, the roots often become diseased and succumb to root rot.

Get Permission to Harvest

When digging on private land, written permission from the landowner or their designee is required. Digging ginseng is **prohibited** on state-owned lands and on national park property. A permit is required to collect ginseng in the Wayne National Forest. Contact the Forest's offices for information:

Nelsonville: 740-753-0101

Marietta: 740-373-9055

Pedro: 740-534-6500

How to Dig Ginseng

To remove ginseng roots, remove soil in a five-inch radius around each individual plant. Remove the clod and then loosen the soil around the root. Gently remove the loose soil from the roots, taking care not to break off parts of the root. Remember to plant the ripened fruit!

After harvest, roots must be washed. A soft brush is best to remove the excess soil from the root. For larger batches, spraying with a garden hose or rinsing the roots in a bucket of water usually achieves this. At this point, the ginseng may be sold to a licensed ginseng buyer. Green ginseng is typically sold at a third of the price of dry ginseng.

When drying ginseng, good air flow around the roots and consistent temperature and humidity are the main factors. Do not dry ginseng in direct sunlight. Many diggers build drying boxes to achieve consistent temperatures and humidity. Drying boxes are usually made of screen to achieve sufficient airflow to the roots. Roots should be placed on screens in a single layer to ensure that air can get to all sides of the roots. Fans can be used to keep air circulating. Optimal drying temperature is around 85 degrees. Sufficient drying should take around two weeks' time. Roots are dry when they cannot be bent. They should break cleanly, revealing a white interior.

How to Age Ginseng

At the beginning of each growing season, the plants send up a main stem from a special underground root, called a rhizome, which sits atop the main root. At the end of each growing season, the main stem leaves a scar on the rhizome. By counting the number of scars on the rhizome, the approximate age of the plant can be determined.

The size of the highly prized root enlarges with age. By the fifth growing season, the roots are usually the size of a little finger. Mature roots are much larger, spindle-shaped, and often forked. Aged and slowly-grown roots bring the highest prices. The best roots are those that are old, variously shaped and forked; moderate in size, stubby but tapering, off-white; light in weight but firm when dried; and which have numerous closely formed rings of wrinkles.



GINSENG REGULATIONS

Ohio Revised Code

1533.86 Ohio ginseng management program definitions.

As used in sections 1533.86 to 1533.90 of the Revised Code:

- (A) "Ginseng" means the plant *Panax quinquefolius* L., also known as *Panax quinquefolium* L., commonly known as American ginseng.
- (B) "Wild ginseng" means ginseng that grows in an uncultivated state and in its natural habitat whether the plant occurs naturally from that habitat or was introduced or increased in abundance by sowing ginseng seed or transplanting ginseng plants from other areas and performing no other cultivation practices.
- (C) "Cultivated ginseng" means ginseng that grows or has been grown in tilled beds under the shade of artificial structures or natural shade and is cultivated according to standard ginseng horticultural practices.
- (D) "Harvest" means to cut, pick, dig, root up, gather, or otherwise collect ginseng.
- (E) "Person" includes any legal entity defined as a person under section 6111.01 of the Revised Code and any political subdivision, instrumentality, or agency of another state.
- (F) "Collector" means a person who harvests ginseng.
- (G) "Grower" means a person who grows cultivated ginseng.
- (H) "Dealer" means a person who buys or otherwise acquires or conveys ginseng for resale.
- (I) "Buy" includes trade or barter.
- (J) "Sell" includes trade or barter.

1533.881 Resale or export registration permit.

No person shall buy or otherwise acquire or convey ginseng for resale or export without a registration permit issued annually by the chief of the division of wildlife in accordance with rules adopted pursuant to section 1533.88 of the Revised Code. In addition to any other penalty, the chief may refuse to issue a permit to or suspend the permit of any person who fails to comply with sections 1533.86 to 1533.90 of the Revised Code or rules adopted pursuant to section 1533.88 of the Revised Code.

1533.882 Prohibited acts.

No person shall do any of the following:

- (A) Without written authorization from the chief of the division of wildlife, harvest wild ginseng except during the harvesting season as established by rule adopted pursuant to section 1533.88 of the Revised Code;
- (B) Without first obtaining written permission from the person entitled to the ginseng, willfully destroy, injure, or harvest ginseng that is the property of that person;
- (C) Attempt to harvest ginseng in a manner that, if harvested, would constitute a violation of division (A) or (B) of this section;

- (D) Ship or otherwise transport out of state ginseng that has not been certified in accordance with rules adopted pursuant to division (B) of section 1533.88 of the Revised Code;
- (E) Except during the buying season as established by rule adopted pursuant to section 1533.88 of the Revised Code, buy, otherwise acquire, or sell uncertified ginseng;
- (F) Fail to keep records as established by rule adopted pursuant to section 1533.88 of the Revised Code;
- (G) Possess ginseng from another state without a certificate of legal taking issued by that state under its ginseng management program;
- (H) Knowingly provide incorrect or false information on or in any permit application, report, export certificate, or other document required by rules adopted pursuant to section 1533.88 of the Revised Code;
- (I) Violate any provision of sections 1533.86 to 1533.90 of the Revised Code or rules adopted pursuant to section 1533.88 of the Revised Code.

Ohio Administrative Code

1501:31-40-01 Ginseng harvest season, reseeded, collection records.

- (A) No person shall dig, harvest, cut, root up, gather, or otherwise collect wild ginseng from its natural habitat except during the season of September first through December thirty-first of each year without written authorization from the chief of the division of wildlife.
- (B) No person shall harvest wild ginseng plants which have not reached maturity and which have unripened berries, or which have less than three-leaf stems (prongs).
- (C) No person harvesting wild ginseng shall fail to immediately replant the seeds at the place where the plants were collected, provided such seeds are present.
- (D) No person shall harvest wild or cultivated ginseng from private or public property without first obtaining written permission from the landowner or his agent.
- (E) Any person collecting ginseng is required to keep accurate records showing the number of pounds and ounces of ginseng, both green and/or dry weight, collected in each Ohio county by date of collection.
- (F) No person collecting wild ginseng shall fail to provide the information required by paragraph (E) of this rule and rule 1501:31-40-02 of the Administrative Code to buyers or dealers with whom the collector does business or, upon demand, to any law enforcement officer having jurisdiction.
- (G) All collectors or sellers under whose direction the root was collected shall sign a statement certifying that the ginseng roots being sold by him or her, have been collected or cultivated in Ohio by him or her or at his or her direction in accordance and in compliance with all state and federal laws governing such collection or cultivation.
- (H) No person shall buy, or otherwise acquire, sell, transport, or possess green wild ginseng collected from property other than their own from April first through August thirty-first of each year without written authorization from the chief of the division of

wildlife. Wild ginseng collected from one's own property from April first through August thirty-first of each year must be for personal use only and must not be entered into commerce, or sold, transported, or given to another person.

1501:31-40-02 Ginseng registration permit; dealer record requirements.

- (A) Dealers and buyers shall acquire a state dealer's registration permit each year prior to purchasing or otherwise acquiring Ohio ginseng legally harvested in that year. The dealer state registration permit is nontransferable and shall expire annually on August thirty-first of each calendar year.
- (B) No person shall buy or otherwise acquire or possess Ohio dry uncertified wild or dry uncertified cultivated ginseng from April first through September fifteenth of each year, or green uncertified wild or green uncertified cultivated ginseng from April first through August thirty-first without written authorization from the chief of the division of wildlife. Live immature cultivated ginseng plants and seeds from cultivated ginseng plants sold by commercial growers for propagation purposed within the United States are not regarded as harvested and are exempt from the certification requirement and may be possessed at any time provided any person possessing such cultivated ginseng supplies proof of purchase, upon demand, to any law enforcement office having jurisdiction.
- (C) No person within Ohio shall acquire ginseng from any collector, buyer, dealer, or grower without making and retaining an accurate legible record of the seller's name and address; dealer's state registration permit number and ginseng lot state certification of legal taking number when applicable; number of pounds and ounces green and/or dry weight of ginseng collected or cultivated in each Ohio county, compiled separately for wild and cultivated lots; year of harvest; and the date of the transaction. These records as well as the accompanying ginseng shall be open to inspection to any authorized employee of the division of wildlife and/or any law enforcement officer having jurisdiction at all reasonable hours.
- (D) No person shall sell ginseng without providing to the purchaser an accurate record of his name and address; dealer's state registration permit number and ginseng lot state certification of legal taking number when applicable; number of pounds and ounces green and/or dry weight of ginseng collected or cultivated in each Ohio county, and compiled separately for wild and cultivated lots; and year of harvest.
- (E) Dealers and buyers of ginseng shall display and distribute educational materials about ginseng, ginseng regulations, and the Ohio ginseng management program as provided by the chief of the division of wildlife.
- (F) Dealers and buyers shall keep accurate legible records on all ginseng sold and purchased. These records shall be submitted to the chief of the division or his agent on a monthly or quarterly basis or as otherwise required; shall include purchases of ginseng to be sold on separate sheets from actual sales; and shall include:
 - (1) The purchaser's and/or seller's name and address;
 - (2) The other dealer's permit number and lot certification when applicable;
 - (3) The number of pounds and ounces dry and/or green weight of ginseng col-

lected or cultivated in an Ohio county, compiled separately for wild and cultivated lots;

(4) The year of harvest; and

(5) The date of the transaction of all Ohio ginseng sold. These records as well as the accompanying ginseng shall be open to inspection by any authorized employee of the division of wildlife and/or any law enforcement officer having jurisdiction at all reasonable hours and must be available to support the origin of ginseng being certified for sale and shipment.

- (G) In addition to other penalties provided by the law, the chief of the division of wildlife may refuse to issue a state registration permit to any person who fails to comply with the requirements listed in rules 1501:31-40-01 and 1501:31-40-03 of the Administrative Code. A person denied a permit is entitled to a hearing pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised Code.
- (H) In addition to other penalties provided by law, the chief of the division of wildlife may suspend the registration permit issued to any person who fails to comply with the requirements listed in rules 1501:31-40-01 and 1501:31-40-03 of the Administrative Code. The opportunity for a hearing pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised Code shall be afforded to the person prior to the decision to suspend the permit.

1501:31-40-03 Ginseng certification for exportation.

- (A) Dealers and buyers shall obtain certification from a state inspector of the division of wildlife certifying that any Ohio ginseng collected or grown in Ohio and being exported from the state has been legally acquired, collected, or cultivated, provided that Ohio ginseng taken out of the state prior to being certified must be returned by the dealer or buyer to Ohio for certification within fourteen calendar days of its receipt by the dealer or buyer. Only Ohio ginseng legally acquired, collected, cultivated or possessed shall be certified. Ohio ginseng acquired by any dealer not in possession of a current state dealer registration permit shall not be conveyed to another person or certified at any time.
- (B) Dealers and buyers shall provide proof of state certification of legal taking to any out-of-state purchaser for Ohio ginseng collected or grown in Ohio which is then sold out-of-state.
- (C) A fee of three dollars per pound or any fraction of a pound dry and/or green weight, payable to the "division of wildlife" shall be charged for certifying Ohio ginseng.
- (D) Ginseng roots legally certified by the state of Ohio or any other state with a ginseng management program approved by the federal wildlife permit office of the U.S. fish and wildlife service, may be purchased, sold, transported, or exported within and out-of-state throughout the year only by dealers registered by the chief in accordance with paragraph (K) of this rule
- (E) No person shall export ginseng collected or grown in Ohio from the state until it has first been certified by a state inspector for the division of wildlife. Provided that ginseng taken out of the state prior to being certified must be returned by the dealer or buyer to Ohio for certification within fourteen calendar days of its receipt by the

dealer or buyer.

- (F) No person shall possess ginseng from states other than Ohio unless those states have a ginseng management program approved by the federal wildlife permit office of the U.S fish and wildlife service and the seller meets the legal requirements established by the state for selling ginseng originating there and said out-of-state ginseng is legally certified in accordance with rules established by the state's ginseng management program or is returned to the state of origin within fourteen calendar days for certification. Evidence of certification shall accompany the ginseng lot in successive sales within or out-of-state and be reported as to the dealer's number, the lot certification number, the weight of dry or green, wild or cultivated roots, and the date of transaction in reporting sales to the chief of the division or his agent.
- (G) No person shall export ginseng collected or grown in Ohio using an out-of-state issued state certification of legal taking for which the weight in ginseng roots certified exceeds the weight of out-of-state ginseng actually purchased or otherwise acquired with that state certification of legal taking.
- (H) Ginseng collected or grown in Ohio must be kept separate from out-of-state ginseng until the ginseng collected or grown in Ohio has been certified by a state inspector.
- (I) Dealers, buyers or any other person shall submit for weighting all uncertified wild and/or cultivated ginseng on hand as of March thirty-first of each year. The chief of the division of wildlife or his agent shall weigh and receipt the number of pounds and ounces of uncertified ginseng on hand. Such uncertified stock is to be documented as to the source, the date harvested, the weight and date of transaction, as is required in the regular certification process. These records as well as the accompanying ginseng shall be open to inspection by any authorized agent of the division of wildlife at all reasonable hours. Future export certification will be based upon these weight receipts in a drawdown process until all documented stock has been certified. Any uncertified stock acquired from April first through August thirty-first of each year requires prior written approval of the chief of the division of wildlife.
- (J) No person shall have cause to have all or any part of the same lot of ginseng to be certified by the state of Ohio or any other state more than one time without written authorization from the chief or his designated agent.
- (K) No person shall convey or otherwise provide any dealer, exporter or other person an Ohio-issued state certification of legal taking for which the weight in ginseng roots state to be legally certified exceeds the weight of ginseng actually being sold or otherwise exchanged.
- (L) No person shall convey or accept a state certificate of legal taking from any person without the weight in ginseng roots so specified in that document accompanying the state certification of legal taking.
- (M) No person shall knowingly provide incorrect or false information on any dealer application, reports, export certification or other document required by paragraphs (A) to (CC) of this rule.

General Harvesting Information

- ◆ The harvest season for wild ginseng in Ohio is September 1 through December 31. Green ginseng may be sold beginning on September 1st and dry ginseng may not be sold until after September 15th.
- ◆ All harvestable plants must have at least three leaves (prongs).
- ◆ All seeds are to be planted at the place where the plant was collected.
- ◆ No license is required to dig wild ginseng on private land, but diggers are required to have written permission from the landowner to harvest.
- ◆ Diggers must keep accurate harvest records by county and collection date.
- ◆ A Ginseng Dealer's Permit from the Division of Wildlife is required to buy ginseng for resale or export from the state.
- ◆ All ginseng must be certified by the Division of Wildlife before it is exported from Ohio.



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