

# Tennessee Ginseng Program



American Ginseng *Panax quinquefolius*



# Why is American Ginseng Regulated?

- ❁ Wild American ginseng is one of many plant and animal species protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora of 1973 (CITES). The United States and 145 other nations have signed the Convention that went into effect on July 1, 1975.
- ❁ The objective of the Convention is to monitor, control, and restrict, as necessary, the international trade of certain wild plant and animal species to prevent adverse impacts to their populations and to insure the continued existence of those species in their natural habitat.
- ❁ Ginseng root is exported in larger volumes than any other native CITES plant species. The majority of American ginseng harvested is exported to China and Hong Kong. In the United States, the harvest of wild American ginseng for international trade began in the mid-1700s. Today, the harvest continues to have strong economic and cultural importance to many communities in the United States and to American Indian tribes.

# American Ginseng Management in the United States











⚙️ The Fish and Wildlife Service (**Service**) has been delegated the U.S. CITES scientific and management authority since the treaty went into effect in 1975. The **Service** established a joint ginseng management program with all of the states that have ginseng populations in order to monitor and regulate ginseng harvest and commerce, and meet the CITES requirements. **The Tennessee Ginseng Program was established in 1978 in the Department of Conservation.**

⚙️ Before a CITES export permit can be issued for ginseng, the **Service** must determine whether the ginseng roots were legally acquired and whether further exports will be detrimental to the species' survival. The states have to send an annual report with the harvest and export information. **Without the annual approval of the Service, a ban would be placed on the export of wild ginseng from Tennessee.**



# Distribution of *Panax quinquefolius*

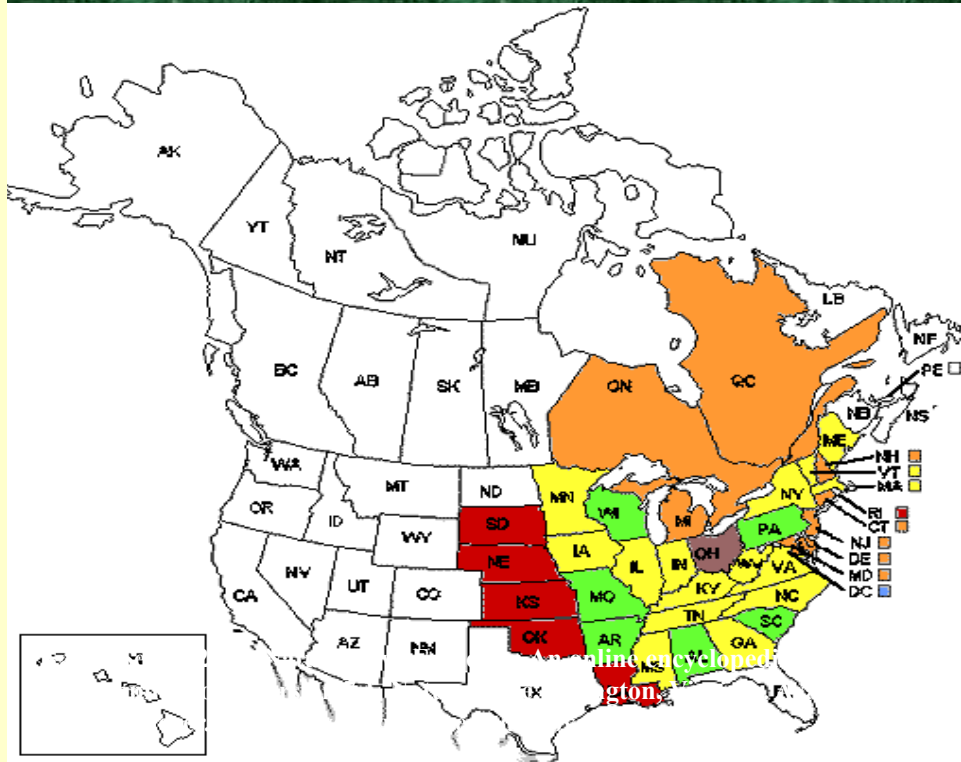
## State/Province Conservation Status

	SX: Presumed Extirpated
	SH: Possibly Extirpated
	S1: Critically Imperiled
	S2: Imperiled
	S3: Vulnerable
	S4: Apparently Secure
	S5: Secure
	Not Ranked/Under Review (SNR/SU)

## Conservation Status

### Not Applicable (SNA)

	Exotic
	Hybrid without Conservation Value



Imperiled or extirpated in 70% of the range.

In Tennessee, state listed as Special Concern-Commercially Exploited



# Smokey Mountain Money



## Threats to the Species:

- ❖ The McCoys
- ❖ Not obeying ginseng laws in each State
- ❖ Digging for commercial sale
- ❖ Cutting and clearing of original forest habitats
- ❖ Inappropriate forest management

APPALACHIAN  
OUTLAWS

A landscape view of a mountain range with the text "APPALACHIAN OUTLAWS" overlaid in a stylized, metallic font. The mountains are dark and silhouetted against a lighter sky.

# Ginseng Program Annual Timeline

## September 1

- ☼ Ginseng Harvest and Buying Season Opens

## December 31

- ☼ Ginseng Harvest Season Closes

## March 31

- ☼ Ginseng Buying Season Closes

## April 30

- ☼ All completed Export Certificates, weight Certificates and Root per Pound Logs due by April 30 from All State Parks

## May 31

- ☼ Annual Report for Tennessee Ginseng Program is due from DNA to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



## Cultivated Ginseng

⊗ grown as a crop “artificially propagated” by sowing seeds and consists of 2 types in Tennessee:

⊗ *Woods-grown* – sown under natural shade in prepared beds and may require use of fertilizers and pesticides

⊗ *Cultivated* – sown under artificial shade in prepared beds and often requires the use of fertilizers and pesticides



woods-grown ginseng

# Ginseng Harvest Season Laws In TN

## ⌘ Wild Ginseng Harvest Season –September 1 to December 31

- Wild ginseng cannot be dug for the purpose of sale or export outside of this season

⌘ Collect only plants with three (3) or more (leaves) and red berries

⌘ Do not collect plants with green berries

⌘ Replant the ripe (red) berries at the collection site

⌘ A permit is not required to dig wild or cultivated ginseng, but landowner permission must be obtained to enter property and dig ginseng

⌘ Violations are punishable by fines of up to \$500.00 and forfeiture of all illegally obtained ginseng





# Tennessee Ginseng Dealer Laws



wild American ginseng

- ❁ To buy ginseng for resale or to **transport ginseng** across state lines one MUST have a state ginseng dealer permit.
- ❁ Required by federal law, but the permit is issued by each individual state.
- ❁ A permit becomes effective on September 1 (or date of issuance thereafter) of each year and will be good and valid through August 31st of the next year.
- ❁ The fee for registration in Tennessee is \$250.00 per year

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❁ To move ginseng out of the state, one must have a DEALER PERMIT and an EXPORT CERTIFICATE

❁ Moving ginseng out of the state without an Export Certificate is a violation of federal law

❁ In order for an Export Certificate to be issued, the dealer must bring the following items to a State Park certifier:

- ✓ Ginseng
- ✓ Purchase Receipt Books
- ✓ Dealer Permit
- ✓ Scale used to weigh ginseng

**One-pound sample of roots must be counted for the Roots-Per-Pound Record**

Ginseng Dealer Registration  
and Permit Number \_\_\_\_\_

Shipment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Year Roots Harvested \_\_\_\_\_



No. 5776

STATE OF  
TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION  
DIVISION OF NATURAL HERITAGE

AMERICAN GINSENG EXPORT CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the wild \_\_\_\_\_, woodsgrown \_\_\_\_\_, or cultivated \_\_\_\_\_ American Ginseng roots in this shipment, consisting of

\_\_\_\_\_ pounds, \_\_\_\_\_ ounces  
(weight numerically)

\_\_\_\_\_ (weight in script)

of green \_\_\_\_\_ dry \_\_\_\_\_ American Ginseng roots were legally collected in accordance with state and federal law in Tennessee as approved by the Fish and Wildlife Service of the United States Department of the Interior. This certification is based on permanent records of commerce in ginseng dealings as required by the state of registration.

The dealer attests the weight herein certified is based upon and is no greater than the amount(s) shown on Tennessee transaction receipt number(s) \_\_\_\_\_,

unaltered dealer copies of which are contained in and have not been removed from the Monthly Purchase Record Book.

Signature of Registered Dealer \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Tennessee Certifying Official \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Tennessee Certifying Official \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Shipment by Dealer \_\_\_\_\_

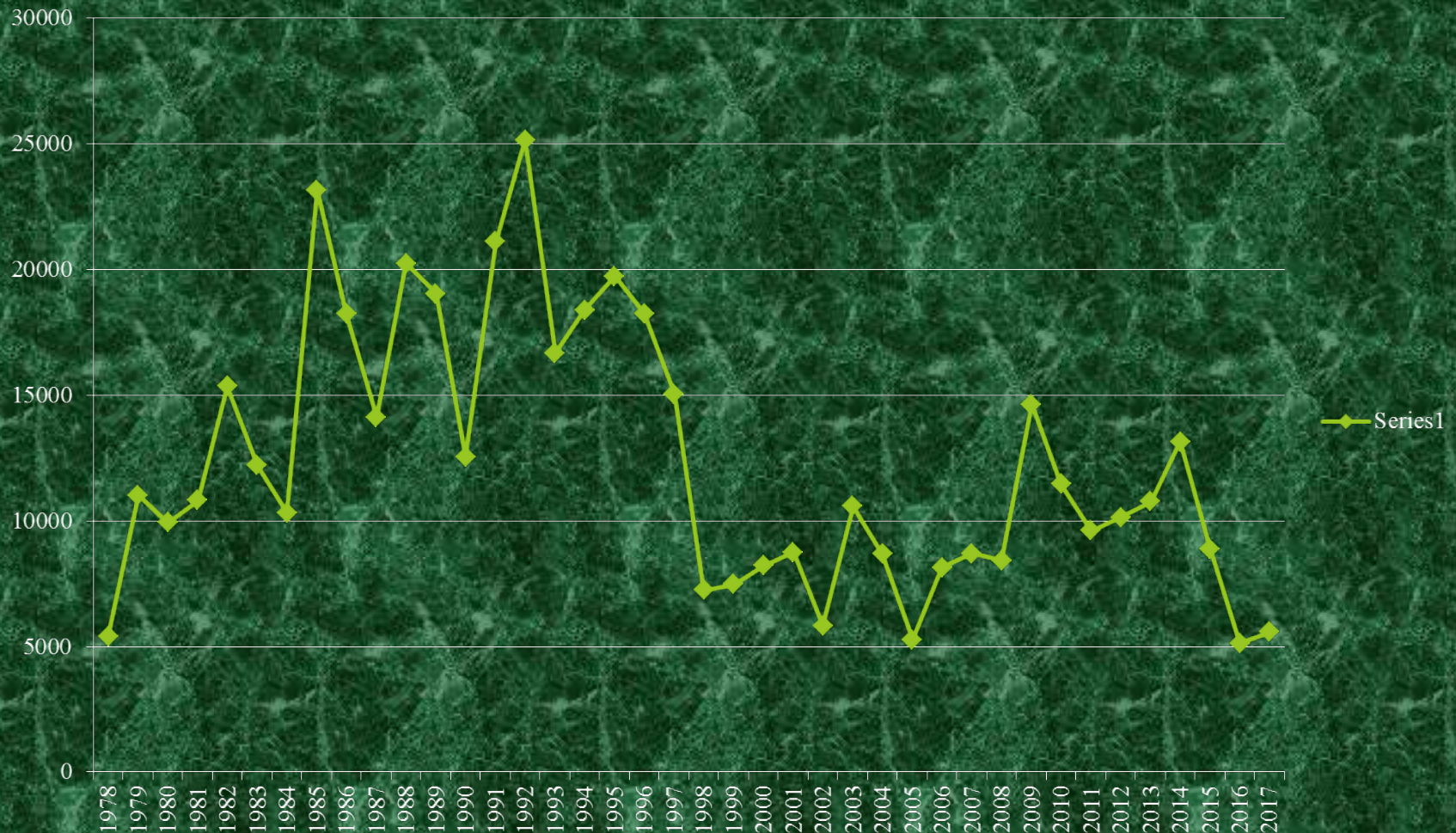
Date of Certification \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** Dealers must be registered in the state from which they purchase the American Ginseng described in this certificate. This certificate must accompany each shipment of ginseng upon and after the first sale of the ginseng. A Federal Export Permit is required to export wild American Ginseng from the United States. Artificially Propagated Plant Certificates are necessary for international shipment of cultivated American Ginseng. Export Permits and Artificially Propagated Plant Certificates are available from United States Fish and Wildlife Service, OMA, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 700, Arlington, Virginia, 22203. USDA General Permits are also required to export American Ginseng. USDA General Permits are available from United States Department of Agriculture, APHIS/PPQ, 4700 River Road, Unit 136, Riverdale, Maryland 20737-1236. A Valid Federal Export Permit



# Ginseng Program in Tennessee

⊗ Since 1978, the mean weight of wild ginseng harvested in Tennessee amounts to roughly 12000 pounds per year





# Enforcement of Ginseng Laws





STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND CONSERVATION  
Bismarck Stone State Park



Chris Cole  
Park Manager 2

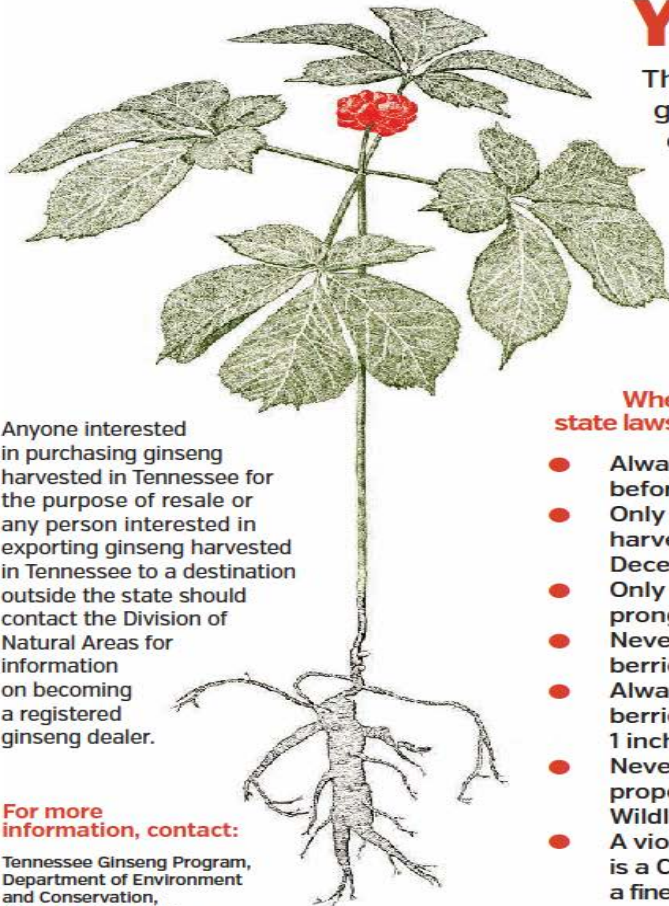
Phone: (615) 523-3347 1071 Sounding Stone, Oak Hill,  
(615) 521-3834 Hiwassee, TN 38296  
(615) 217-8200  
E-mail: [chris@trc.state.tn.us](mailto:chris@trc.state.tn.us)





# GINSENG DIGGERS!

## TENNESSEE GINSENG NEEDS YOUR HELP!



Anyone interested in purchasing ginseng harvested in Tennessee for the purpose of resale or any person interested in exporting ginseng harvested in Tennessee to a destination outside the state should contact the Division of Natural Areas for information on becoming a registered ginseng dealer.

**For more information, contact:**

Tennessee Ginseng Program,  
Department of Environment and Conservation,  
Division of Natural Areas,  
W.R. Snodgrass TN Tower, 312 Rosa L. Parks Ave. 2nd Floor,  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0447, Phone 615/532-0431.  
<http://www.tn.gov/environment/article/na-ginseng-program>

The sustainable future of wild ginseng in Tennessee depends on careful stewardship of the plant and its habitat. Good stewardship will preserve this American harvesting tradition through respecting and following the Tennessee ginseng harvest laws.

**When harvesting wild ginseng follow state laws for good stewardship harvesting.**

- Always get landowner permission before digging ginseng.
- Only dig ginseng roots during the harvest season, September 1 – December 31.
- Only dig plants with three or more prongs.
- Never dig ginseng plants with green berries.
- Always replant ripe, red ginseng berries at the digging site under 1 inch of soil.
- Never dig ginseng on state-owned property, except North Cumberland Wildlife Management Area.
- A violation of the ginseng harvest law is a Class A Misdemeanor punishable by a fine and forfeit of all ginseng harvested.



# Questions?



[https://www.tn.gov/environment/  
program-areas/na-natural-areas/na-  
ginseng-program.html](https://www.tn.gov/environment/program-areas/na-natural-areas/na-ginseng-program.html)