

## **Frequently Asked Questions about American Ginseng in Pennsylvania:**

### **Do I need a permit for collecting ginseng?**

Pennsylvania does not have a permit for collecting American ginseng. However, you do need the permission of the land owner to make the ginseng harvested legal for sale. Always ask land owner permission, plants on their property belong to the land owner. When plants are sold to a licensed dealer you must provide your name and address and the county from which the plants were harvested.

### **Where can I collect ginseng?**

State and Federally managed public lands in Pennsylvania do not allow the collection of American ginseng. This includes DCNR Bureaus of Forestry and State Parks, State Game Lands and the Allegheny National Forest. You can also grow and maintain your own ginseng on forested land. If it is on land other than your own, get landowner permission.

### **What is harvesting ginseng sustainably?**

When you harvest ginseng you remove the root of the plant and therefore remove any potential for that plant to set seed and add new plants to that population. If all the plants in a population are removed and no seeds are allowed to set, then eventually there will not be any plants to harvest. In order to maintain a population so that plants can be harvested in subsequent years you need to choose carefully the plants you will harvest. PA regulations say that the plants must be 3 prongs of 5 leaflets each (at least 5 years old) and the berries must be red when the seeds are planted in the vicinity of the harvested plant. You may not harvest until September 1 of the year. The plants generally will start producing seed about 5 years old, but taking all of the seed producing plants will also keep the population small and limit the number of roots that can be harvested. Take time to manage the population.

### **What is a Vulnerable Plant License?**

A Vulnerable Plant License is needed if you want to become a ginseng dealer to buy and sell American ginseng. In order to buy ginseng plants and roots to resell, including out of state, you will need this annual license. In order to maintain your license you will need to report to DCNR Bureau of Forestry the amount of ginseng you bought and sold, who you bought it from, who you sold it to and whether it was green or dried.

### **How do I get a Vulnerable Plant License?**

You can contact DCNR, Bureau of Forestry, Ecological Services at 717-787-3444 to ask for an application. The completed application needs to be accompanied by a \$50.00 check payable to Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The license is good until June 30.