

October 9, 2015

Hello,

We at DCNR, Bureau of Forestry, are asking you and others who have sold ginseng in Pennsylvania to share some general information by completing the brief enclosed survey. It will only take about 5 minutes to complete the form. Summaries of survey question responses (and any additional comments provided) remain confidential and serve to inform Pennsylvania's wild ginseng management program by helping to determine how much planting and cultivation is happening in the State.

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) recognizes that many Pennsylvanians plant, grow, or farm so-called "wild-simulated" or "woods-grown" ginseng in the State. Much of this ginseng ends up in the market as "wild" ginseng and this continues to complicate interpretation of wild ginseng exports from Pennsylvania. DCNR wants to be sure that any actions to help conserve wild ginseng do not hurt forest-based ginseng growers and this developing niche industry. While we considered asking you for additional information about the source of ginseng you sold as part of buyer transactions, we understand this information is highly sensitive and you may not want to share information about the source of ginseng you sold. Instead, we hope the enclosed annual survey will help shed light on ginseng planting and cultivation in Pennsylvania.

This is the fourth year that we have been trialing the use of this survey to determine how much cultivation is occurring on forestlands in Pennsylvania. If you are interested in seeing results from the first three years, you can request this report directly from our University partner Dr. Eric Burkhart at Penn State University who has been handling the data analysis. Some of you may recognize Dr. Burkhart's name since he has been working for over a decade here in Pennsylvania to help DCNR better understand the ginseng industry and assist landowners with forest-based cultivation in the State. He can be contacted directly by email at epb6@psu.edu or by phone at 814-863-2000. Dr. Burkhart has also been working with DCNR and other partners in Pennsylvania to develop a 'forest grown' verification program that many producers are finding increasingly useful for documenting and marketing their ginseng crops. Further information on this program is available directly from Dr. Burkhart and by visiting the following web-site: <http://www.paorganic.org/forestgrown>

You are receiving this survey because your name and address were obtained from 2014 ginseng buyer's transaction logs, which are submitted annually to DCNR by buyers. If you feel you received this survey in error, or you have questions or concerns regarding this survey, please contact me by telephone at (570) 724-8149 or e-mail at cfirestone@pa.gov. In addition, we welcome written comments regarding ginseng cultivation and ginseng management/conservation efforts in Pennsylvania with this survey form.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,



Wild Plant Program Manager