

Endangered Species

Because wild American ginseng is an endangered species plant, there are regulations on its harvest, sale and shipping. To protect the wild plant populations, there has to be restrictions on the movement of field grown American ginseng as well. This only applies to ginseng root in a recognizable form, as no one should or would grind or alter wild root into powders, tinctures, etc. so that they could not be recognized, thus decreasing its value to that of cultivated ginseng. Wild root in the fall of 1995 to the present is selling for up to \$400.00 U.S./dry lb.

To keep track of the movement of American ginseng a form has to be filled out and stamped by an Agriculture and Agri-food officer before a shipment can be released for export. This is an 'Application for Permit to Export Endangered Species' form or a CITES form and it is available from Agriculture and Agri-food offices in New Westminster and Kelowna. Please see a copy of this form in the appendix as well as the mailing addresses and telephone information. DO NOT use this one as the original is seven (7) copies, each in a different colour.

This process falls under the 'Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna' (CITES), a worldwide body helping to protect the rapidly declining number of species of animals and plants. For more information, go to: <http://www.cities.org/> .

Marketing of Ginseng is a whole separate topic from the process of site selection and the culture of ginseng. This guide will not delve into this world in any great detail, as it is as individual as the company selling it. There are many companies available to help growers get their product to the marketplace. Some growers have marketing people on staff and others are learning the process by trial and error. In any case our root is getting to markets all over the world in many forms, as field run dried root, capsules, tinctures and sliced root to name a few.

Market Areas

SOUTHEAST ASIA

South East Asia is our largest market and probably always will be. In 1991 the Ministry of Economic Development, Small Business and Trade published a document 'Ginseng Market Opportunities in the Asia Pacific Region for the British Columbia Ginseng Industry.' This was useful in giving some basic information on countries accessible to our ginseng industry at that time. This publication is now out of print but photocopies could be made available if there is a demand. In 1995 Korea allowed some American ginseng to be imported at a reduced tariff (an agreement under GATT), and anything over that amount reverted to the high tariff rate that makes sales to that marketplace prohibitive.

EUROPE

Europe is a market area that is quite used to medicinal and other herbs. It has been subjected only to Asian ginseng until recently when a small amount of American ginseng was shipped there. One of the restrictions to this marketplace is that they do not want or won't allow any soil on the roots. This is the opposite to Asian buyers who want the root a bit dirty. Some adjustments will have to be made in our post harvesting handling procedures to market our product there, or we can process our root into value added products and market these in Europe.

DOMESTIC

There is an increasing market for herbals and natural products here in North America and all over the world as well. We only have 300 M people here so a 1% increase is not nearly as significant as a 1% increase in China as an example, but it is important as every little bit helps. There is a growing population of Asian nationality people in North America and they are users of ginseng. Another advantage of this is the contacts they have all over Asia for spreading the word about our product. They are also doing some marketing of our products as well.

Marketing Forms

FIELD RUN

Most ginseng is sold to buyers as 'field run.' This means it is harvested, washed and dried, then all of the root mass is put into the shipping container.

GRADED

Some buyers are now looking for a somewhat altered product and are specifying things like 'no fibre.' As this industry progresses and more product is offered for sale, more grading and specific requests will become a part of doing business. We need some grading standards as this process of grading proceeds, to define what a minimum of acceptable quality is.

GINSENOCIDETESTED

As of this time there is a limited market for ginseng with a known or guaranteed ginsenoside content. This will increase as more products are made from ginseng. There is also a move towards more products with a 'guaranteed potency' of the active ingredients. Some of these are in the marketplace already.

There is a problem with ginsenoside testing in that, for ginseng, there are no standards for procedures on how to rate a grower's product for ginsenoside content. Some laboratories are using six and others seven ginsenosides for a total percentage. Some are using whole root, some small side roots or even fibre which all have different percentage levels. This problem is worse for comparisons of root sources from different growing areas, as then many other factors come into play such as climate and soil types. This problem is being studied at this time and testing standards may be used in the near future.

The following laboratories have shown proficiency in ginsenoside testing in a recent Laboratory Standardization program:

- ALS Environmental, Vancouver
- British Columbia Research Inc., Vancouver
- BRI Biopharmaceutical Research Inc., Vancouver
- Canadian Phytopharmaceutical Corporation, Richmond
- JR Laboratories, Burnaby
- Natural Factor's Laboratory, Burnaby
- Norwest Labs, Surrey

The addresses for these can be found on page 167 of this guide.

FRESH

Some market is developing in North America for fresh root. This will almost all be in the Chinatowns of larger cities as virtually no, non-oriental people use fresh ginseng in cooking. Ginseng is a taste, like anything else, you have to grow up with. We did not grow up eating ginseng — beets and parsnips yes, but not ginseng. Most people in North America grew up with western medicine as well, so were not subjected to herbals or natural remedies.

Value Added Products

At the start of 1996 there are seven or eight companies in British Columbia making value added products for the domestic, U.S.A. or Overseas markets. Some of these products are:

- tea — regular and instant
- capsules
- tablets (regular and chewable)
- tinctures
- carbonated drinks
- graded root — bulk and gift packs
- powdered root — bulk or packaged
- sliced root
- ginseng chips
- hand lotions
- vitamin/ginseng combinations

This value added industry will continue here in British Columbia with these and other products to be made in the future.

Exporting Requirements

When ginseng is shipped to various parts of the world, there are procedures for each of the areas that must be followed. It is governed by the country of destination and handled here by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada rules and regulations. As well, they do the inspections if necessary. See Table 26 for a summary of these regulations. A complete document is available from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

TABLE 26. Export requirements — ginseng seed/roots/products

Note: All recognizable ginseng plant parts other than seeds are required to be accompanied by a CITES export permit when exported from Canada.
Contact:

The Administrator, CITES
Canadian Wildlife Service
Environment Canada
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H3
Tel: 819-997-1840 Fax: 819-953-6283

The package is also available in Kelowna:

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
1905 Kent Road
Kelowna, British Columbia V1Y 7S6
Tel: 250-470-4884 Fax: 250-470-4899

They can also be processed by:

IFS InterCan Freight Systems
Division of Perishables Intl. Transportation Inc.
Mr. Ed Gold (egold@piyvr.com)
Unit 129-5000 Miller Road
Richmond, British Columbia V7B 1K6
Tel: 604-244-0855 Fax: 604-244-0966

There is also a CITES ‘multi use’ export permit available for cultivated American ginseng. Contact Canadian Wildlife service or Ed Gold for more information.

Note: To EU countries, if CITES is required, import permit from EU must be obtained prior to export.

Warning Note: Users of this summary are reminded that it is prepared for convenience of reference only and that, as such, it has no official sanction.

Note: For a legal and expanded version of this summary (The Plant Protection Import Requirements for Ginseng, document # D-94-25), please contact:

Al Oliver, British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
162 Oriole Road
Kamloops British Columbia V2C 4N7
Tel: 250 371-6050 or Fax: 250 828-4631

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Country	Product	Import Permit	Phyto. Cert.	CITES	Additional Declaration (other inspection information)
Australia	dried	no	no	yes	although a phyto is not required, this is a new request for information and a root phyto could be issued if the importer has documentation requiring one.
China	root	yes	yes	yes	Re: Import permit, exporter should ensure Chinese importer is aware they need an import permit, not required by AAFC Re: Certification — freedom from soil and visible pests.
China	seed	yes	yes	no	phytosanitary certification procedures under development—see Claire or Rob
Hong Kong	root	no	no	yes	
Germany	seed	no	no	no	
Germany	root	no	no	yes	free from soil if used for propagation
Great Britain	seed	no	no	no	
Jamaica	root	no	yes	yes	free from soil, debris and pests (practically free)
Japan	root	no	yes	yes	freedom from soil, no exemption for small quantities carried by passengers
New Zealand	seed	yes	yes	no	seed sample — 25,000 seeds — approx. 1 kg to Saskatoon seed lab—ask for a seed analysis certificate for weed seeds present and for soil. Issue phyto on basis of seed certificate and visual examination. Ask lab to return seed to supplier.

Malasia	root	no	no	yes	
South Africa	seed	no	yes	no	<i>Colletotrichum panacicola</i> does not occur in Canada inspection for soil particles, plant debris, storage insects.
Singapore	root	no	no	yes	
Spain	fresh root	no	yes	yes	plain phyto
Spain	stratified seeds	no	no	no	
Taiwan	root (fresh and dried)	no	yes	yes	Roots are free from Ditylenchus dipsaci (pathology note, ditylenchus dipasci. The Bulb and Stem Nematode is known to occur in Canada but ginseng is not a recorded host of this pest. If injury were to occur, it would be on well established plants, in the crown of the root. Injury would be a black, necrotic area.) washed free from soil, free from visible pests, includes mail order shipments, small quantities carried by passengers are exempt from quarantine certification requirements.
U.S.A.	root	no	no	yes	
U.S.A.	seed	no	no	no	U.S. customs required to contact USDA at time of entry