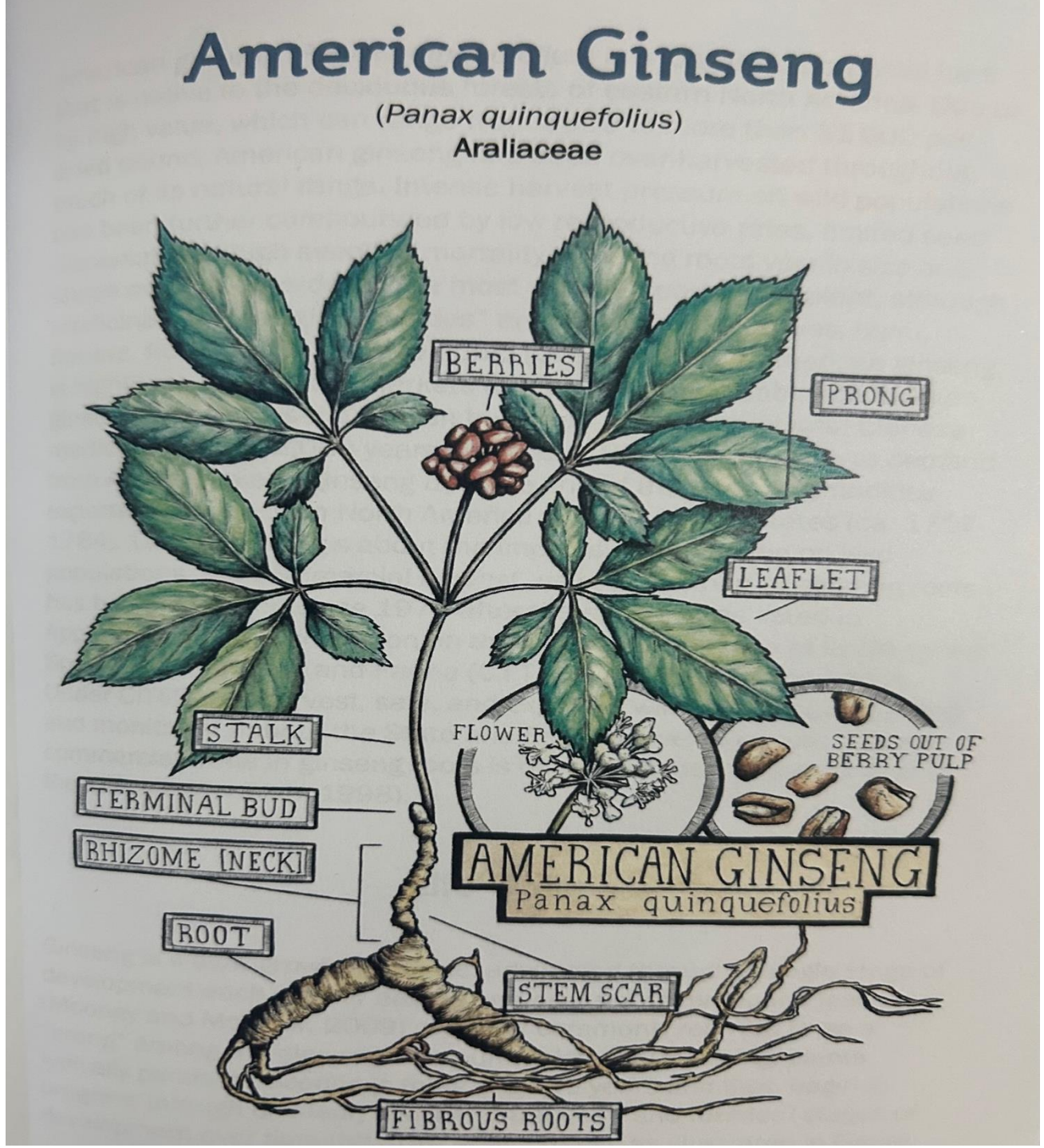
Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Grow American Ginseng in Your Woods

Tony Johnson
Forestry & Wildlife Program
UW-Madison Extension





Growing American Ginseng

- Prepping for planting
- Requesting seeds
- Planning for planting

Step 1:
Identify ginseng on your own property!

- Often found amongst
  - Sugar maple
  - Basswood
  - Jack in the pulpit
  - Maidenhair fern





PictureThis

If you have wild American Ginseng: protect and propagate

- Preserve local genetics
- Threats
  - Deer, theft



SAVING GINSENG SEEDS

A practical guide to preserving American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) seeds and strains.

Prepared by Sara Jackson (Bat Cave Botanicals) and Eric P. Burkhart (Penn State University) v.1 (2025)

‘HOW TO’ Protect Your Ginseng Patch

Wild or simulated

Manage your patch

- Allow some airflow, sunlight
- Manage competition, invasive species
- Protect from theft – herbivory
- Hide berries ASAP



‘HOW TO’ Sustainably Harvest Wild Ginseng

- Harvest mature plants only (3+ prongs)
- Harvest at correct time (Sept. 1 – Nov. 1)
- Plant seed nearby
- Never harvest all mature plants



Forest Farming Continuum

- Woods cultivated
  - farming in the forest
- Wild simulated
  - Adding seeds, roots
- Wild stewarded
  - Managing wild pops









‘HOW TO’ plant & when… site preparation

- Clear understory of competition
- Plan for deer protection (brush, fence, arrow/bullet)
- Timing – plant seed in fall as tree leaves are dropping (Oct/Nov). Prevent seed from drying out.







‘HOW TO’ get good seed?

- Commercial seed from Wisconsin ginseng gardens
  - By-product of field cultivated
  - Need stratification (18 months)
- Wild seed must be replanted in vicinity of parent plant
- Fill out the seed request FORM



‘HOW TO’ plant American Ginseng… supplies

- Stratified American ginseng seed (1 oz. Per 100 sq. ft.)
- Pruners, hand saw, and rakes to clear understory and expose soil







‘HOW TO’ Planting tips

- Keep seed cold (not frozen) until ready to plant before ground freezes
- Plant near companion plants
- Clear planting site(s) of brush, debris, and leaf litter and scratch dirt loose.
- 1 oz. of stratified American ginseng seed should cover approx. 100 sq. ft.
- Spread 4-5 seeds /sq. ft on prepared soil and press into soil with footsteps
- Rake leaf litter & debris over planting site(s) & cover w/ slash to inhibit herbivory
- Seeds will get stratification in-situ over winter and should germinate next spring







Forestry & Wildlife Program
DIVISION OF EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Tracking Your Wild-Simulated American Ginseng

This worksheet helps landowners assess potential ginseng growing sites, record conditions, and track development over time, from planting through harvest. *Checkbox items in italics represent ideal conditions.* Fill out as much information as possible, but omit anything you are unsure about. Complete pages 1 and 2 while planting and keep a copy for your records. Submit a copy to Extension and use page 3 to track your plot each year after planting (email forestry@extension.wisc.edu)

Landowner and Plot Information

Landowner name(s)

Email address

Plot number, name, and/or landmark reference

County

Indicator Species

Check all plant species currently present in or near (within 20 feet of) your plot.

Canopy trees

- ☐ *Sugar maple*
- ☐ Basswood
- ☐ Butternut
- ☐ Red oak

Understory plants

- ☐ *Wild ginseng*
- ☐ *Maidenhair or rattlesnake fern*
- ☐ *Blue cohosh*
- ☐ *Jack-in-the-pulpit*
- ☐ *White baneberry*



Forestry & Wildlife Program
DIVISION OF EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Ginseng Web resources

- **September – Site assessment, plant scouting, planting site prep and flagging**
- **October – Source seeds, plant your own ginseng patch**

Prepping site(s)
Requesting seeds
Planning you planting

Questions?

Tony Johnson
608/386-8900
Anthony.johnson@wisc.edu



Ginseng Support Groups

- United Plant Savers
- AHPA - American Herbal Products Association
- Ginseng Board of Wisconsin
- UW-Madison Extension Forestry



Forestry & Wildlife
Division of Extension

Forestry & Wildlife Program
DIVISION OF EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



Subscribe to our emails

Visit our website go.wisc.edu/forestry

Follow us on social media
@WiscEXTforestry

forestry@extension.wisc.edu

Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

got woods?









Connect with us!

woodlandinfo.org

forestry@extension.wisc.edu

WiscExtForestry

@WiscEXTforestry

Extension Forestry can help you:

Learn about your land

Improve wildlife habitat

Find income opportunities

Plan your woods' future

Improve climate resiliency

Get your family involved

Natural Resources Education Program
UW-Madison Division of Extension

Learn About Your Land