

Maine
Ginseng Growers
Association
1996-97

Formation of MeGGa

1. July 27, 1996 - Interested growers derived from a mailing list provided by the Umbagog Naturalist Institute, meet and appoint a committee of 8 people to draw up guidelines on by-laws for a growers association. The 8 committee members meet briefly that day and develop the organization's statement of purpose. The group then agree to meet again on August 10, 1996, to work on developing a set of by-laws for the grower's Association

2. August 10, 1997 - Using a variety of information provided by the State Bureau of Incorporation and other agricultural organizations, the 8 committee members create a interim constitution and by-laws. Three or four members of the group agree to meet on August 15, 1997 to refine the final draft. A formal presentation is made to 30 interested growers at a August 17, 1996 meeting. This group of growers decide after a few minor changes to the by-laws to notify all interested parties on the Umbagog mailing list that there would be a First Annual Meeting of the Maine Ginseng Growers Association to review and approve the by-laws, elect officers and a Board of Directors, and discuss appropriate business on September 7, 1996 at the Andover Elementary School.

3. September 7, 1996 - By-laws approved. Board Elected - Pres. - John Berg ; V.P. Grant Powers ; Sec. Wendy Green ; Tres. Debbie Murphy ; Board Members : Dr. Steven Drane, Dr. Michael DuBois, John Ambagis, Jim Marshall, Dave Simmons.

4. October 29, 1996 - Non-Profit Incorporation formed.

1996-97 Key MeGGa Events

1. May 3-4, 1997 - **Northern Tier Ginseng Conference** - Co-sponsored by MeGGA and Umbagog Naturalist Institute. Held at Mountain Valley High School, Rumford, Me. Speakers ; Dr. Michael DuBois, Umbagog Naturalist Institute and Umbagog Trading Co., History of Ginseng in the Northeast, David Sharkey President of Quebec Pontiac Growers Assn., Quebec's Ginseng Program and Hong Kong Market, Rep. John Baker, Legislative process, Ann Gibbs, Me. State Horticulturalist, State Ginseng regulations and Wild Harvesting. Dave Simmons, Marketing and the World Wide Web. - 2nd Day MeGGA business and group discussions.

2. June 28, 1997 - **Spring Member Workshop/Seminar** - Opportunity for members to visit an active ginseng growing site. Growers John and Mabel Ambagis opened their home for the day. Participants viewed both seedling beds and wild-simulated sites.

3. July 29, 1997 - Association sponsored lecture on "**Ginseng and other Medicinal Plants**". World renowned Botanist and Maine Native Steven Foster Lectured at Auburn Middle School on the different varieties of Ginseng used throughout the world. Foster also had a book signing in conjunction with Bookland.

4. September 27, 1997 - **Fall Member Workshop Seminar** - Held at the Umbagog Naturalist Institute, Dr. Michael DuBois presented a hands-on seminar on developing a seed and seedling program.

5. October 4, 1997 - **Association's Annual Meeting**

1996-97 MeGGA Highlights

1. **Association grant** - Dr. Steven Drane, submitted for and received a \$6,000 grant from the *Northeast SARE Farmer/Grower Initiated Grant Program*, to be used for operational and developmental projects within the Association.

2. **Growers Guide** - The Association, in conjunction with the Umbagog Trading Company purchased a complete "growers guide" written by Dr. Michael DuBois of the Umbagog Naturalist Institute for distribution to all current and future members. The guide covers a brief history of ginseng in the Northeast, plus complete information for growing and harvesting a cash crop in our area.

3. **Two Informational Flyers** - The flyers written by Dr. Michael Dubois, exclusively for the Association, provide detailed information on "Disease and Animal control" and how to develop a "Seedling Production Program". These flyers are available for all full-time members.

4. **Development of an Informational Letter** - a letter outlining the Association's organization structure, philosophies, and benefits was developed so that the association may respond to any public inquiry about the Association in the most costly and professional manner.

5. **Delegates at the "Me. Agricultural Leadership Conference"** - Two Board members, Dr. Steven Drane and Past President John Berg represented the Association at a two day Conference, sponsored by the University of Maine's Cooperative Extension in January of this year.

6. **Delegates meet with Me. State Commissioner of Agriculture, Edward McLaughlin** - Board Members, Dr. Michael DuBois, Dr. Steven Drane, and Dave Simmons met with Commissioner McLaughlin and State Horticulturalist Ann Gibbs to discuss the present and future role ginseng may play in the State's Agricultural economic future.

7. **Informational Leaflet developed** - Dr. Michael DuBois produced an informational leaflet for the Association to be used at informational booths or at Association events. The leaflet contains a quick synopsis of the Association, plus provides a number of facts about ginseng in general. It is cost effective to produce due to its limited size.

8. **Informational Booths** - The Association has participated in two informational projects during the past year. The first was a one-day event in Garland Maine, sponsored by S.W.O.A.M. and the Penobscot U.S.D.A.. It concentrated on forest products and events. Our booth was located in the "secondary forest products" tent and we were kept quite busy answering questions and handing out Association material.

The second event, the Fryberg Fair, was a major undertaking for the Association. Dr. Steven Drane coordinated the entire operation to include recruiting volunteer personnel and booth management. The event will run from Sept 28 until Oct 5, 1997, from 9am to 9pm. The booth is located in the Forestry Resource Center

9. **Development of a Web Page for the World Wide Web** - Association member, Mike Mattor, of Rumford has devoted a considerable amount of time to develop an Association Web page. The Page provides information about Ginseng and our Association. It will be produced in color with the introduction both in English and the two main Chinese dialects, Mandarin and Cantonese. The Association is considering the purchase of a personal domain site on the World Wide Web with monthly fees of about \$25 to \$35.

10. Association representation at the Ithaca New York, "Ginseng Days" - Two Board members, John Ambagis and Dave Simmons traveled to Ithaca, N.Y. in September to attend the "Ginseng Days" sponsored by the New York State Ginseng Growers Association. While there they passed on much information about our Organization and made many new contacts. One of the featured speakers at the New York Conference was Scott Persons, Author of the popular book, "American Ginseng, Green Gold".

11. Association Newsletter - The Association's first newsletter was published and distributed in September. It consisted of various articles written by both the Board and Association members. One key feature is the Correspondence column. This will provide members an opportunity to have a direct feedback about the Association's programs and operation, plus it will serve as a source of answers for individual growing problems.

12. Association Representation in China - Rep. Brian Bolduc of Lewiston, is one of 25 State Legislators traveling to Hijlin Province in China in October 1997 for a two-week tour of Agricultural and Trade centers. The trip is sponsored by the Maine International Trade Center in Portland. Rep. Bolduc met with Association President Powers to discuss the Association and to learn about Ginseng and the Far East Trade markets. He will be distributing our Association brochures as well as bringing back information on contacts he made while in China.

The

Maine Ginseng Growers' Association

welcomes you to their website.

Welcome to the Maine Ginseng Growers' Association (ME.G.G.A.), a non-profit organization dedicated to the research and development of this magnificent herb.

Our focus is the wild, woodsgrown variety. Ginseng is an adaptogen, or an overall health enhancer; our variety from the Northeastern mountains is among the most potent and sought after in the world! As an added 'special,' our local species exhibits some calmative effects aswell. Our region supports optimum growing conditions, but there is much to learn. Therefore, we are asking you for your support and input.

Please join us and visit our site regularly as we will continually be updating these pages.

For now, please continue your journey by pressing the button of the browser which you are currently using.



The version of this website intended for users of Netscape Navigator. These pages were created using Netscape Navigator v3.01 Gold, at a resolution of 800 x 600 pixels.

For users of Microsoft's Internet Explorer, we created another version, for which we used Internet Explorer v3.01, also at a resolution of 800 x 600 pixels.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO GINSENG...

Ginseng is the most famous Chinese herb. It is the most widely recognized plant used in traditional medicine. Various forms of ginseng have been used in medicine for more than 7000 years. Several species grow around the world, and though some are preferred for specific benefits, all are considered to have similar properties as an effective general rejuvenator.

The name panax is derived from the Greek word panacea, meaning "all healing" and the benefits of ginseng are recognized as such. Ginseng is commonly used as an adaptogen, meaning it normalizes physical functioning depending on what the individual needs (for example, it will lower high blood pressure, but raise low blood pressure).

Ginseng is native to China, Russia, North Korea, Japan, and some areas of North America. It was first cultivated in the United States in the late 1800's. It is difficult to grow and takes 4 to 6 years to become mature enough to harvest. The roots are called Jin-chen, meaning "like a man," in reference to their resemblance to the shape of the human body.

Ginseng contains vitamins A, B-6 and the mineral Zinc, which aids in the production of thymic hormones, necessary for the functioning of the defense system. The main active ingredients of ginseng are the more than 25 saponin triterpenoid glycosides called "ginsenosides." These steroid-like ingredients provide the adaptogenic properties that enable ginseng to balance and counter the effects of stress. The glycosides appear to act on the adrenal glands, helping to prevent adrenal hypertrophy and excess corticosteroid production in response to physical, chemical or biological stress.

It is also used to reduce the effects of stress, improve performance, boost energy levels, enhance memory, and stimulate the immune system. Oriental medicine has deemed ginseng a necessary element in all their best prescriptions, and regards it as prevention and a cure. It is said to remove both mental and bodily fatigue, cure pulmonary complaints, dissolve tumors and reduce the effects

of age.

Studies done in China showed that ginsenosides also increase protein synthesis and activity of neurotransmitters in the brain. Ginseng is used to restore memory, and enhance concentration and cognitive abilities, which may be impaired by improper blood supply to the brain.

Ginseng helps to maintain excellent body functions. Siberian ginseng has been shown to increase energy, stamina, and help the body resist viral infections and environmental toxins. Research has shown specific effects that support the central nervous system, liver function, lung function and circulatory system. Native North Americans considered it one of their most sacred herbs and add it to many herbal formulas to make them more potent. The roots can live for over 100 years.

Animal studies have shown that ginseng extracts stimulate the production of interferons, increase natural killer cell activity, lower cholesterol and decrease triglyceride levels. Men have used the herb to improve sexual function and remedy impotence. Ginseng is believed to increase estrogen levels in women and is used to treat menopausal symptoms. It is also used for diabetes, radiation and chemotherapy protection, colds, chest problems, to aid in sleep, and to stimulate the appetite.

Ginseng is one of the most popular healing herbs used today throughout the world. It increases mental and physical efficiency and resistance to stress and disease. Ginseng's adaptogenic qualities help balance the body, depending on the individual's needs. It is known to normalize blood pressure, increase blood circulation and aid in the prevention of heart disease.

WHAT IS MEGGA'S ROLE?

Our objective is to stimulate the use of ginseng as a medicine...

● The Ginseng Dictionary.

Getting confused of all the terms mentioned on these pages? Visit The Ginseng Dictionary for some help in trying to understand what is going on in the world of ginseng.

● Ginseng-related articles.

Here at MEGGA, we try to keep these pages up-to-date. Therefore, we use information available from other sources. The articles section is a great place to start off if you want to get more familiar with ginseng and its uses before browsing through all the pages on this website.

● The Membership Application Form.

Interested in finding out more about ginseng and ginseng-related material? Sign up now to become a member of MEGGA.

● The Comment/Question Form.

Use this form if you have any questions or comments about this site. Suggestions are welcome, too!