



## Guidance Document on Good Collection Practices

It is important to establish a set of good collection practices in order to control for consistent quality and sustainable harvest of wild plant materials.

There are several good guideline documents currently available on the development of Good Collection and Agriculture Practices (see below) which may be consulted when developing any individual plan for good collection practices of wild harvested material. This guidance is meant to simply introduce some of the key concepts and practices involved as they pertain to Certified Regenerative wild harvest.

### Key Reference Documents to be Consulted:

1. The American Herbal Products Association (AHPA) Good Agricultural Collection Practices and Good Manufacturing Practices (GACP-GMP) for botanical materials [http://www.ahpa.org/Resources/GoodAgriculturalandCollectionPractices\(GACP\).aspx](http://www.ahpa.org/Resources/GoodAgriculturalandCollectionPractices(GACP).aspx)
2. WHO guidelines on good agricultural and collection practices (GACP) for medicinal plants <http://www.who.int/medicines/publications/traditional/gacp2004/en/>
3. Guideline on Good Agricultural and Collection Practice (GACP) for Starting Materials of Herbal Origin -European Medicines Agency Evaluation of Medicines for Human Use; Committee on Herbal Medicinal Products (HMPC) <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/glossary/good-agricultural-collection-practice>

### Botanical Identity & Documentation

The botanical identity should be noted for any wild collection, with both scientific name (genus and species) and any local common name. If there is any reasonable doubt regarding the identity of the botanical species, a voucher specimen should be collected and submitted to a botanist or regional or national herbarium for identification. Along with the identification of the plant material, the collector should note the collection location as specifically as possible, this is easy to do with a cellular phone, as many map applications will provide exact latitude and longitude. Keep records of the other observations made of the collection site, such as surrounding species, habitats and remaining individuals.

### Personnel

Any personnel employed as collectors should be trained on identification of the target species, as well as any species in the area that can be confused with the target species. Personnel need to also be trained on appropriate selection of sites and plants for collection, as well as sustainable

collection techniques so that the resource is not depleted over time. Any personnel must also be trained on proper cleanliness measures to take to ensure hygienic practices, as well as be free of health conditions which could result in contamination of collected material.

## **Wild Collection**

### Permits

The steward must have the necessary permits—if any—before harvesting the target species. If the collected material is to be exported, the appropriate permits must be secured for export.

### Collection Site

Collection practices should ensure for the long-term survival and sustainability of wild populations of the target species and associated habitat. An inventory of the population on the holding, as well as detail on populations occurring in the surrounding environments should be recorded. Collection sites should be free of possible pollution or environmental contaminants, such as away from roadsides, drainage ditches and garbage dumps.

### Selection of Individuals for Harvest

In selection of target individuals for harvest, it is important to not select individuals that are the only members in a particular area, and never harvest all of the individuals in a harvest site. Collect only from stands that are abundant and healthy with multiple individuals representing different ages.

### Collection Technique

Only ecologically non-destructive systems of collection should be used, and this varies widely from species to species and depends also on the part collected. For example, when harvesting a vine that grows on trees, the tree should not be felled for easy harvest of the vine. Also, if harvesting root material, then the tap root should not be disturbed, but only some lateral roots should be located and collected. If a fruit is the target, then enough fruit should be left undisturbed in order to allow for sustainability of the population.

### Habitat Stewardship

Practice good stewardship of the habitats on a holding. When visiting a site for collection, try to minimize disruption of the habitat as much as possible and avoid trampling nearby organisms and repair as much as possible any disruptions before leaving (such as by filling in holes where roots were harvested).

### Harvest Conditions

Medicinal or aromatic plants should be harvested in the appropriate season or time period to ensure good quality of product.

### Equipment

Collection tools should be kept clean and in good working condition, and whenever possible not made from materials that can promote contamination, such as wood.

## **Botanical Quality**

### Specifications for raw materials

Specifications should be developed for the raw materials produced by the harvest of the target species either by the buyer, the seller, or both. Specifications should detail the identity, physical and chemical characteristics required for the raw material. If the target species is intended for nutritional or medicinal use, pharmacopoeial monographs or other compendia may be consulted for specification development.

## **Post-Harvest Handling**

After collection is finished, the appropriate preliminary processing should be performed in order to clean as well as take out any contaminants (such as weeds), followed by any sorting and cutting needed to prepare the material.

### Drying

Depending on the length of time before the target material can be sent to the processing site, drying may need to happen on site. Adherence to proper drying conditions is essential to prevent degradation of the raw material and growth of microbial or mold growth.

### Packaging & Storage

Collected material should be cleaned as much as reasonable on site and placed into clean well aerated containers for transport. Any harvest of other target species should be well separated in packaging for transport.