

## QUALITY CONTROL:

### Handling:

- Wash hands before harvesting or handling Sweetgrass.

### Harvesting and processing:

- Harvesting Sweetgrass can be done from July—September.
- Grass harvested in a sustainable manner (grass only, roots undisturbed, may be rejected if root attached.)

### Drying process:

- Grass was dried on screens or tarps in layers of 2—4 inches.
- Producer must have a drying shed or a place that can be inspected
- Store in shade to prevent heating while out harvesting
- Rinse and inspect for insects or damaged grasses, then set to dry
- Use a fan to move air
- Once crispy dry, store in clean containers

### Storage Technique:

- Product should be stored in a clean poly woven rice bag, paper bag, paper box, or clean container.
- Dirty containers will not be accepted and the product in it maybe rejected
- Store in a dry room away from moisture
- Do not store in a shed that has been used for storing gas and oil.

**BUYING REQUIREMENTS** (THIS IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE GENERAL STANDARDS. REQUIREMENTS MAY VARY FROM BUYER TO BUYER. PLEASE CONFIRM WITH YOUR BUYER BEFORE HARVESTING):

- Producers must have a wild harvesters association Membership Card.
- General harvest area.
- No foreign smell (ex: gas, oil)
- No foreign material (ex: Different kinds of bark, dirt, rocks)
- No mould.

**All bags, boxes and containers may be inspected to determine if product meets a buyers specifications.**

### **PRICING:**

- Call NFDC prior to shipping or traveling to buying depot.



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## NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS INFORMATION BROCHURE



(FROM HARVESTING PRACTICES)

## SWEETGRASS



## HARVESTING SWEETGRASS

### SCIENTIFIC NAME:

- Hierochloa odorata

### CREE NAME:

- Wehkuskwa (“sweet grass”)

### COMMON NAMES:

- Holy Grass
- Buffalo Grass
- Vanilla Grass

### PLANT SPECIES IDENTIFICATION:

#### Flowers

- Fresh: greenish or purplish towards the base and golden at the tip
- Structure an open pyramidal panicle
- 4—10 cm long
- Spikelets, three flowered
- May—September

#### Fruit

- A caryopsis

#### Leaves

- 60 cm long
- 2-8 mm wide
- Base of leaves, just below soil surface is broad and white, without hairs
- Underside of leaves are shiny, no hairs
- Vanilla aroma when dried

### Plant Reproduction:

- Reseeding
- Rhizomes

### Habitat:

- Marshes
- Moist soils
- Lakeshores

### What is harvested:

- Leaves

### PRODUCT USES:

- Ceremony/Ritual
- Teas
- Aromatics
- Medicinals
- Crafts

### Aboriginal Uses:

- Sweetgrass was used in smudging to purify the body by driving out evil spirits and carry prayers up to the creator.
- A tea was made to relieve coughs or nausea.
- It was also braided or incorporated into may designs and placed on the wall and used as an air freshener.
- Soaked leaves were used as a hair wash.
- The grass was chewed to prolong endurance during ceremonies of prolonged fasting.
- The grass was used in basketry and crafts.
- External uses was for sore eyes, saddle sores and chapped skin.

### SPECIES SUSTAINABILITY:

Practice sustainable harvesting, by not over harvesting in one area.

### HARVESTER CERTIFICATION:

- **NFDC** is working on providing organic certification on selective NTFP'S in each community harvest area.
- **Buyers may not purchase** Pineapple Weed from producers who does not follow the **HARVESTERS CODE OF ETHICS (Copy available at the NFDC Centre).**