

QUALITY CONTROL:

Handling:

- Wash hands before harvesting or handling Sweet Flag.

Harvesting and processing:

- Harvesting Sweet Flag root can be done as soon as the frost leaves the ground and the plant is recognizable

Drying process:

- Producer must have a drying shed or a place that can be inspected
- Spread Sweet Flag root on screens in layers
- Room must have heat source
- Use a fan to move air around Sweet Flag root
- Drying process takes 3-6 days in a well ventilated dryer

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
- Do not store in a shed that has been used for storing gas and oil.
- Dried Sweet Flag root should be stored in a dry room away from moisture until it is ready to be transported to buying depot

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)

SWEET FLAG



HARVESTING SWEET FLAG

SCIENTIFIC NAME:

- *Acorus americanus*

CREE NAME:

- **Wèkà'sk** ("sweet tasting herb")

COMMON NAMES:

- Rat Root
- American Sweet Flag
- Belle-angélique
- Wikis

PLANT SPECIES IDENTIFICATION:

Flowers

- 2—4" dense, thick, cylindrical spadix (a thickened, fleshy axis)
- Yellow to brown

Fruit

- Brown, hard, dry, with 2—3 seeds
- Yellow to brown

Leaves

- Sweetly aromatic
- Bright green blade shaped, sheathed into each other at base
- Blades have 2—6 raised veins, and a swollen center when viewed in cross section.

Plant Reproduction:

- Blooms June—July
- By seed or Under ground network of rhizome

Habitat:

- Shallows
- Ponds
- Marshes
- Water less than 20" in depth
- Wet, silty soil

What is harvested:

- Root

PRODUCT USES:

- Colds and coughs
- Sore throats
- Lower back pain
- Upset stomachs and cramps

Indigenous **Uses:**

- The Cree drink it as a tea to treat sore throats and colds
- The Northern Cree chew the root for tooth-aches and teething pains
- The Cree use it as a bartering tool with other nations.

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** Sweet Flag from producers who does not follow the **HARVESTERS CODE OF ETHICS (Copy available at the NFDC Centre).**