

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
- Medicinal
- Crafts

Indigenous **Uses:**

- Sweet grass is used in smudging to purify the body by driving out evil spirits and carry prayers up to the creator.
- A tea is made to relieve coughs or nausea.
- It is also braided and incorporated into many designs and placed on the wall and used as an air freshener.
- Soaked leaves are used as a hair wash.
- The grass is chewed to prolong endurance during ceremonies of prolonged fasting.
- The grass is used in basketry and crafts.
- External use is 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).**