To Travellers to North America – Controls on Import of American ginseng root

American ginseng is an endangered species under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The import of its roots*, including those that are in transit, is strictly regulated under the Animals and Plants (Protection of Endangered Species) Ordinance which is the local legislation that gives effect to the CITES.

To import American ginseng roots of wild origin into Hong Kong, an import licence issued by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) must be obtained in advance. An export permit issued by the CITES Management Authority of the exporting country must also be produced when the shipment arrives Hong Kong.

No import licence is required for the import of American ginseng roots of artificially propagated origin into Hong Kong but an export permit issued by the CITES Management Authority of the exporting country is still required.

The above licensing control applies to both commercial and personal consignments including tourist souvenir items, irrespective of the quantity involved. Any person who contravenes the requirements will be prosecuted and the ginseng roots concerned will be forfeited upon conviction.

For obtaining an export permit when in North America, please contact the authorities below:

a) in Canada
   Canadian Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment
   Tel : (819) 9971840, Fax : (819) 9536283,
   Website : http://www.cites.ec.gc.ca/eng/sct0/index_e.cfm

b) in USA
   Division of Management Authority, US Fish and Wildlife Service
   Tel : (703) 3582095,
   Fax : (703) 3582281
   Web site : http://international.fws.gov

Please contact our Endangered Species Protection Division at Tel : (852) 1823, Fax : (852) 2376 3749 or visit our web site at : www.cites.org.hk for more information on the control of endangered species.

* Manufactured parts and derivatives of American ginseng root such as powders, pills, extracts, tonics, teas and confectionery are excluded from the control.

# In 2006, the US authority continues to issue stickers (as shown below) for export of up to 10 lbs (4.5kg) (per individual) cultivated American ginseng which is carried as personal effects. The sticker is considered as an export permit.

# Beginning from March 2006, the Canadian authority will issue stickers (as shown below) for export of up to 4.5kg or 10 lbs (per individual) cultivated American ginseng which is carried as personal effects. The sticker is considered as an export permit.

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Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

U.S. origin cultivated American ginseng

Individual may carry up to 10 lbs. as personal effect

U.S. Management Authority contact: 703-358-2095

Valid until 12/31/06

Sample of US Sticker

Sample of Canada’s Sticker

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

February 2006 (Revised)