

Visual Site Assessment & Grading Criteria for a Potential Woodland Ginseng Growing Operation in a Northern Forest

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Circle only one choice for each category.

<i>Category and Description of Criteria</i>	<i>Points</i>
Category A – Dominant tree species (50% or more of mature trees)	
1. Sugar maple (add additional 5 points more if average circumference is greater than 60 inches.)	10
2. Mixed hardwoods consisting of beech, black cherry, red maple, white ash, red oak, ironwood, basswood	5
3. Mixed hardwoods as above plus some hemlock and/or white pine	5
4. Red and /or white oak	3
5. Ironwood, birch, hickory	1
6. All softwoods: pine, hemlock, spruce, fir, or willow	0
Category B - Exposure (orientation)	
1. North, east, or northeast facing	5
2. South, southeast, or northwest facing	2
3. West, southwest facing	0
Category C - Slope	
1. 5% to 25% slope	4
2. Level to 5% slope	2
3. 25% or greater slope	0
Category D – Soil Physical Characteristics	
1. Few stones, 75% tillable	10
2. Moderate small stones, 50% - 75% tillable	8
3. Very stony, 25% to 50% tillable	5
4. Large rock outcropping, many boulders, less than 25% tillable	3
5. Soil too rocky to till anywhere	0

Category E – Understory Plants		
1.	Reproducing population of wild ginseng	15
2.	Sparse wild ginseng	10
3.	Maidenhair fern, rattlesnake fern	8
4.	Christmas fern, blue cohosh, red or white baneberry	6
5.	Jack-in-the-pulpit, other ferns, trillium, bloodroot, foamflower, jewelweed, mayapple, elderberry	5
6.	Wild sarsaparilla, Virginia creeper, ground nut, lady's slipper	3
7.	Club moss, princess pine, bunchberry	0
8.	Woody shrubs such as spicebush, witchhazel, viburnums, shrubby dogwoods, alder	0
9.	None of the above (no ground level vegetation)	0
Category F - Security		
1.	Very close to occupied, full-time residence of potential grower, within easy viewing of residence (noisy, outside dogs housed nearby add 5 points)	10
2.	Forested land less than 50 to 100 yards from grower's residence, patrolled regularly	8
3.	Remote woodlot within one quarter mile of residence, patrolled regularly	3
4.	Non-resident grower, remote woodlot	0
Total Score (add points from each category):		

Results:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 40 to 60 points | Excellent site, great potential |
| 30 to 40 points | Good site, do complete soil analysis |
| 20 to 30 points | Fair site, test soil |
| Less than 20 points | Poor site, look elsewhere |

*Prepared by Bob Beyfuss, Cornell Cooperative Extension - 8/98
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