

Wild or cultivated mushrooms can be sold at farmers markets, grocery stores, restaurants or other direct sales venues. Savvy consumers and chefs look for high quality and unique mushrooms. While white button, crimini, and portabella mushrooms are the most popular varieties in grocery stores, chanterelles, morels and lobster mushrooms shine at farmers markets. There are state regulations for harvesting wild mushrooms and processing mushrooms.

Cultivated mushrooms are considered a vegetable and there are no regulations for growing them conventionally. Contact the WSDA Organic Food Program for the organic regulations for cultivating mushrooms.

This fact sheet includes information on:

- regulations for harvesting wild mushrooms;
- selling mushrooms;
- selling processed mushrooms; and
- resources for commercial production.

## Regulations for Harvesting Wild Mushrooms

Wild mushrooms harvested for commercial use in Washington State must be done with proper permission and permits. This includes mushrooms harvested from land owned or managed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), US Forest Service (USFS), other public lands as well as private landowners. The key is to obtain written permission from the agency or private landowner prior to harvesting.

One exception is that mushrooms harvested **and** sold on Native American Tribal lands do not require permitting. Those harvested on Tribal land but sold on non-tribal lands must be harvested with a permit. The regulations for harvesting wild mushrooms are outlined in Washington state law (RCW 76.48).

Private timber growers represent a large part of the forested land. It can be difficult to ascertain who owns private land and it may be necessary to research land ownership in order to get written permission to harvest mushrooms. It is generally easier to get permission to harvest from land managed by USFS or DNR.

Technically, wild mushrooms are classified as forest products by DNR and the USFS. The DNR and USFS have different requirements and permits for harvesting wild mushrooms.

### **Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**

Harvest of certain products for commercial gain is handled through permits and leases. If you are interested in obtaining commercial access to a large parcel of trust land, for harvest of tree boughs, salal, bear grass and/or other decorative forest products, please contact the DNR region for the area in which you are interested at [www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/em\\_region\\_map\\_and\\_contacts.pdf](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/em_region_map_and_contacts.pdf).

DNR sets limits for harvesting mushrooms for "personal use." By definition, personal use forest products may not be sold or bartered. People harvesting mushrooms for personal use are limited to harvesting three gallons of a single species, not to exceed nine gallons of all species, plus one mushroom per day per person. To contact the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, go to the Special Forest Products section at [www.dnr.wa.gov](http://www.dnr.wa.gov) or call (360) 902-1774.

### **USDA Forest Service**

To ensure a continuing supply of special forest products, the Bureau of Land Management and the USFS are working together to create uniform harvesting regulations on federally managed land in the Northwest.

In general, if you remove anything from federal land, you must have a "special forest products" permit. Therefore, if you want to harvest mushrooms on US Forest Service land, you must possess a valid "Special Forest Products" permit.

In addition, a “Commercial Use Permit” may be required from the National Forest District office closest to the harvest site. Different sites may have different requirements regarding fee and whether the mushrooms can be used for personal or commercial use. To find national forests that are part of the US Forest Service’s Pacific Region of the U.S. Forest Service, visit: [www.fs.fed.us/r6](http://www.fs.fed.us/r6).

For example, the Colville National Forest website posts a wild mushroom harvesting season chart with permits and fees for that forest. It also highlights specific forest information such as the harvest of any Matsutake (Pine) mushrooms requires a commercial use permit. It also contains mushroom harvesting etiquette and resources for identification. See the Colville National Forest website for Forest Product Permits at [www.fs.fed.us/r6/colville/passespermits/special-forest-prod.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/colville/passespermits/special-forest-prod.shtml), or call (509) 684-7000.

No permit is needed for "incidental" amounts of wild mushrooms for personal use. For mushrooms, an incidental amount is considered up to 60 mushrooms or 3 gallons per day (whichever is less volume).

Landowners may require additional permits to harvest mushrooms on their property.

Mushroom buyers that buy wild mushrooms from harvesters and resell them are not required to obtain any permits.

## Selling Mushrooms

There are no regulations for selling whole, fresh mushrooms. If packaged in containers, or processed, labeling requirements for processed foods must be met.

## Selling Processed Mushrooms

You must use a licensed WSDA Food Processing Facility to process mushrooms, including drying, slicing, freezing or canning mushrooms. These facilities may be one of the least expensive options for processing mushrooms. Contact Food Safety for Processing Facilities near you. Producers may also get their own facility licensed through WSDA’s Food Safety Program. Please see the Processed Food fact sheet for complete details by emailing [organic@agr.wa.gov](mailto:organic@agr.wa.gov) or calling (360) 902-1805.

## Resources for Commercial Production

For information on cultivated production and markets for small farms, see the University of Idaho Extension publication on “Growing Mushrooms Commercially – Risks and Opportunities” at <http://info.ag.uidaho.edu/pdf/CIS/CIS1077.pdf> .

ATTRA also has a free publication on “Mushroom Cultivation and Marketing” available at [http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/mushroom.html#growing\\_mushrooms](http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/mushroom.html#growing_mushrooms) or by calling (800) 346-9140.

---

### Recommended Fact Sheets: Food Processing, Organic Certification

For further assistance or to make suggestions on how to improve this fact sheet, please email [smallfarms@agr.wa.gov](mailto:smallfarms@agr.wa.gov) or call (360) 902-2057 or (360) 676-2059.