Product Selection Criteria: It is obvious that the NTFP candidate should be neutral at best and not harmful to users or others, thus the reason for promoting tobacco substitutes. If there is economic gain then cultivate in virtually wild conditions such as discussed in *Ginseng in Appalachia* (1996). The NTFP needs to be harvested in a sustainable manner. The cultivated NTFP should not be invasive nor contaminate the existing wild stock, the latter being safeguarded by planting in areas where the wild stock is absent. Finally, focus attention on NTFPs that offer good return after an initial investment. Ginseng's Asian markets alone are expected to reach 12 billion dollars.

Market Controls Those of us closely associated with burley tobacco growing know about this highly successful sixty-year-old loan program allowing growers to bring products to controlled markets. When a crop does not sell to the graded price level, it is purchased by the cooperative through loan money supplied by the Commodity Credit Corporation, a lending arm of the USDA. This pooled tobacco is later sold when the price improves. Granted this works well for a commodity like tobacco that actually improves with shelf-life. That is hardly the case of most NTFPs, but there exists an added difference that some commodities like ginseng have a vastly larger potential market than is currently being met. Thus the market controls would not be on amounts of production, only marketing procedures. The Burley Growers Cooperative is a market model awaiting replication in the NTFP arena – and the state of Maine is doing exactly this with ginseng marketing.

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