



SOCHAN GATHERING



The second annual sochan gathering season in Great Smoky Mountains National Park was held from March 1st to May 31st, 2020. This year we...

- **Revised the Gathering Agreement** to allow the harvest of whole sochan leaves, not just the final three lobes (or “turkey foot”). The changes were approved in February 2020 and went into effect immediately.
- **Maintained gatherer access and program function throughout COVID-19 closures.** We worked closely with leadership at Great Smoky Mountains National park to ensure gatherer access during their shutdown. We also adapted our own program administration to function remotely without interruption, accepting harvest reports by email, text message, and phone.
- **Increased participation.** This year, we issued 24 permits (vs. 11 last year). Our gatherers completed 13 sochan harvests and collected 11.3 bags (vs. 3 harvests and 0.95 bags last year). Overall, at least 25 individual community members helped picked sochan in the Park (vs. 6 last year).
- **Continued research harvests.** Our staff worked with park personnel to access research plots during COVID-19 closures. Total sochan harvest (including community and research harvests) was 12.3 bags, or 330 servings.

In 2020...

24

permits issued

13

community harvests

2

research harvests

12.3

bags gathered

330

servings of sochan

Timeline: 2020 Season

2020 marked the second season of sochan gathering by EBCI members in Great Smoky Mountains National Park under 36 CFR § 2.6. The gathering season ran from March 1st to May 31st.

- January: Applications for gathering permits were solicited in via community clubs, Facebook, tribal email, and the *Cherokee One Feather*. 29 applications were received.
- February 6th – 11th: Trainings covering program rules and procedures were held. 24 applicants attended trainings. Trainings were offered in Cherokee and Snowbird (though no Snowbird residents applied for a permit or attended a training). Additional makeup trainings were provided for those affected by bad weather and school closures.
- February 25th: Gathering Agreement Amendment allowing whole leaf sochan harvest approved by the Park and signed by Chief Sneed.
- February 26th: Permits were issued for all applicants who successfully completed a training. This totaled 24 permittees, of whom 21 ultimately picked up their permits and gathering bags.
- March 1st: First day of official gathering season.
- March 17th: First community sochan harvest.
- March 23rd: Tribal COVID-19 shutdown began.
- March 24th: Great Smoky Mountains National Park COVID-19 shutdown began.
- April 6th – 12th: Peak sochan harvest week.
- May 7th: Last community sochan harvest. Overall, 78% of this year's sochan harvest occurred during the park's COVID-19 closure.
- May 9th: Great Smoky Mountains National Park phased reopening began.
- May 31st: Last day of official gathering season. Nine permittees successfully harvested sochan in the park (two of them multiple times).

What's in a serving?

A serving of sochan is defined as 100 g (the same as for greens like kale or spinach). Each serving is rich in dietary fiber, folate, potassium, and other key nutrients.

Full nutritional panel is proprietary to EBCI. Tribal members may contact our office for more information.

