

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON D.C.

December 15, 1934

Mr. Svetislav Roerich

Dear Svetik:

I have been informed of your willingness to send over to me some drug plants for growing under our conditions. At the present time I am not sure that I have a place which is altogether suitable.

I am enclosing herewith the average rainfall and mean temperature Fahrenheit month by month for Concord, New Hampshire in extreme northeastern United States, Santa Fe, New Mexico in southwestern United States, St. Paul, Minnesota in the northern part of central United States, and Mount Weather, Virginia, which is about 60 miles from Washington and about 1700 feet above sea level whereas Washington is practically at sea level. Mount Weather temperature, therefore, averages above 9° below Washington. Klamath Falls, Oregon, is in northwestern United States at an altitude of 4000 feet.

Most of the medicinal plants of the United States seem to come from around Ashville, North Carolina, where the altitude is 2250 feet. In this mountainous area of western North Carolina, eastern Tennessee and southwestern Virginia, the temperatures both winter and summer seem to be very similar to your own temperatures. The annual rainfall is a little over 40 inches and the January mean temperature is around 37°, while the summer temperature is around 75°.

On the chart which is enclosed the blue and red lines indicate the degree to which the temperatures month by month in southwestern Virginia and eastern Tennessee approximate your situation. If low winter temperatures and low altitudes do no harm, there are many places in the middlewest which would be suitable.

With all good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours
(signed) H.A. Wallace.
Secretary

Enclosure.

On second sheet:

P.S.

I would appreciate your opinion as to the importance of altitude, and of the necessity of having a mean January temperature above 15° Fahrenheit.

4

Dear Svetik,

Please tell me at your early convenience whether or not you use a lath shade such as is used for young evergreen trees or for ginseng when hinseng is grown commercially in this country. Do you grow in full exposure to the sun or do you grow under trees or do you grow in the shade of a great hill? If you grow on a slope, which slope do you prefer? The slope which gets the eastern sun but not the western? The slope which gets the southern sun but not the northern? Will the plant grow fairly well when out in the open sun?

Do you have much snow cover in the winter? What is the coldest weather without snow cover which it will stand so far as you know?

I have made arrangements to have the plant grown in several different localities and will keep a special account of any expense incurred. When and if there is income above the expense, I will divide with you equally.

I am pressing on many matters which I believe to be of importance to the L. The spirit of joyous tension is more and more in the air. Please convey to your mother my high esteem. Her spirit has permeated space.

It will be a great joy sometime to meet with you when there has been earned a certain amount of rest from action. in the world of ceaseless daily affairs.

My heart's warmth to you and yours.

Sincerely,

(signed) G

Dear Svetik,

I am much interested in trying the plant out on a small scale, planting it in the green house this winter and then putting the plants out in the open next summer. After a few years of observation we can tell the best place for commercial production.

Perhaps you can answer a few questions which would guide me as to the best environment. In the places where it grows best what is the average rainfall month by month throughout the year? Second, what is the average mean temperature month by month throughout the year? Third, does it prefer full sunlight? Fourth, does it prefer a deep, rich soil or a sandy soil or a clay soil or a timber soil? Will it grow well on soil and under climatic conditions where Indian corn grows well? Does it prefer dry soil, moist soil or ordinary well drained garden soil? What is the lowest altitude at which you might expect it to grow successfully? What is the furthest north latitude at which you would expect it to grow successfully? Of course inscrease in latitude compensates to some extent for decrease in altitude, but in the case of some plants this compensation does not work.

What part of the plant is used and what is the method of preparation? Would the controlled movement of hot air or warm air in artificial drying help?

Experimenting with plants has always fascinated me and I shall be happy to do some preliminary work and we can then decide as to what further course of action seems wise.

For the glory of your name I trust that we can make a success of this such as you would desire?

G

(Typed)