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Sommario/riassunto

A quiet revolution is taking place in America's forests. Once seen primarily as stands of timber, our woodlands are now prized as a rich source of a wide range of commodities, from wild mushrooms and maple sugar to hundreds of medicinal plants whose uses have only begun to be fully realized. Now as timber harvesting becomes more mechanized and requires less labor, the image of the lumberjack is being replaced by that of the forager. This book provides the first comprehensive examination of nontimber forest products (NTFPs) in the United States, illustrating their diverse importance, describing the people who harvest them, and outlining the steps that are being taken to ensure access to them. As the first extensive national overview of NTFP policy and management specific to the United States, it brings together research from numerous disciplines and analytical perspectives-such as economics, mycology, history, ecology, law, entomology, forestry, geography, and anthropology-in order to provide a cohesive picture of the current and potential role of NTFPs. The contributors review the state of scientific knowledge of NTFPs by offering a survey of commercial and noncommercial products, an overview of uses and users, and discussions of sustainable management issues associated with ecology, cultural traditions, forest policy, and commerce. They examine some of the major social, economic, and biological benefits of NTFPs, while also addressing the

potential negative consequences of NTFP harvesting on forest ecosystems and on NTFP species populations. Within this wealth of information are rich accounts of NTFP use drawn from all parts of the American landscape—from the Pacific Northwest to the Caribbean. From honey production to a review of nontimber forest economies still active in the United States—such as the Ojibway “harvest of plants” recounted here—the book takes in the whole breadth of recent NTFP issues, including ecological concerns associated with the expansion of NTFP markets and NTFP tenure issues on federally managed lands. No other volume offers such a comprehensive overview of NTFPs in North America. By examining all aspects of these products, it contributes to the development of more sophisticated policy and management frameworks for not only ensuring their ongoing use but also protecting the future of our forests. Open access edition funded by the National Endowment for Humanities and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Humanities Open Book Program.
