**Handout 1.1-** **Discovering Your Botanical History**

**In this activity, you will interview family members such as grandparents, parents, aunts or uncles about plants that may hold significance to them. Your job is to identify a plant that represents your family history by looking back in time with your family member.**

**Part 1. Self-introspection**

First, think about your own memories of plants as a child and how those are connected to family or other significant role models in your life. ***Answer the questions below in full sentences.***

1. What plant(s) was/were an important part of family gatherings in your yard or house during your childhood?
2. Was there a particular feature, texture, smell, or color you liked the most on a certain plant? If so, what was it and describe that aspect of the plant.
3. Was there a particular food item (or items) that you enjoyed picking, growing, or cooking as a child with other family members?
4. Were there any plants you and your friends/siblings played with as children (ex: making jewelry, toys, forts, swords, etc.)?
5. Can you recall any interesting stories or memories attached to a specific plant from your childhood?

**Part 2. Family interview**

Next, talk with older family members about their own memories of plants and how they relate to your family. Your goal is to identify three potential plants that you might choose to represent your family’s botanical history. It is important that you are able to obtain a living sample of your final chosen plant; for this reason, we ask that you identify three to ensure at least one of them will work for subsequent activities.

List the person(s) you interviewed and any information about them that they would like to share (age, profession, where they are from, hobbies, etc.).

***Now, begin the interview! Ask and then record your family member’s responses to the questions below.***

1. Does our family (living or ancestors) have any plants that are/were important to us? These could be plants that were used in specific traditions, medicine, meals, or for income or hobbies, etc. Please describe.
2. Are there any plant-based products that have been historically important to our family? Examples could be baskets woven from plant fibers, salves from medicinal plants, syrups made from maple trees, honey from bees that feed on clover, wood carvings made from special hardwoods, or even moonshine from corn! List any examples below.
3. Thinking back to your childhood, are there any plants that stand out to you as significant in your memories? What are they and why?
4. Is there a plant in particular that holds sentimental meaning in our family? Could you describe the story of why this plant is special? Does this story refer to a specific plant (for example, an oak tree planted in your grandmother’s yard) or to a species more generally (any oak tree is fine)? What does that plant symbolize to our family?
5. For the plants you described in the previous questions, what time of year did our family obtain or use the plants? Was the time of year or the season important? What about weather (for example, temperature, rainfall)? Did these factors affect the plants or our family’s use of these plants in any way?
6. Are there any family photos I could see that relate to the plants we just talked about? Could I have permission to use these for this project?
7. (Optional) If any of the plants or plant products are native to another part of the world, is it possible for us to a obtain living sample here? If so, where or how could we find them? Are there any similar plants we can find locally?
8. (Optional) List any other questions or comments that came up during your interview.

Based on your discussion with family above, please complete the table below for at least three potential species that represent your family botanical history.

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| **Plant name** | **Specific plant or general species (see question 4)?** | **What time of year is it most useful, or when does it flower/fruit?** | **Where/how can you obtain a living specimen?** |
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