

Essential Oil Distillation for West Virginia Herb Growers: A Smell-Good Project

Final Report for FNE01-358

Project Type: Farmer

Funds awarded in 2001: \$6,035.00

Projected End Date: 12/31/2002

Matching Non-Federal Funds: \$12,626.00

Region: Northeast

State: West Virginia

Project Leader:

[Myra Bonhage-Hale](#)

La Paix Herb Farm

Project Information

Summary:

Note to readers: attached is the complete final report for FNE01-358.

This project created an 11 member herb growers network, conducted educational events for growers in the network, explored essential oil distillation of the herbs grown by the growers network, and explored value added products that can be made with the herbs and spent distillation materials.

The Herb Growers Network was formed with assistance from the State Department of Agriculture, WVU Extension, and the Mountain State Organic Grower and Buyer Association. Several meetings with potential growers were held; plug plants of lavender and lemon balm were distributed to, and planted by, growers in the network; a 32 page booklet of propagation and uses of lavender and lemon balm was created and distributed to all participating growers; and a two day Propagation and Distillation Workshop was held.

A small distillery was set up at La Paix Herb Farm and 12 different herbs were tested for the feasibility of making essential oils. The essential oil distillery was also demonstrated at several different venues. Myra found that she did not get a high yield of essential oils from the distillations but believes that there may be a market for the hydrosols (herbal waters) that she made with the distillery.

Myra learned that a lot of different needs have been created by this project. More research needs to be done to determine how to achieve a higher yield of essential oils from the distillation process; there is a need for research and education programs dealing with all aspects of herb production in West Virginia; more plant material, especially lavender and peppermint, needs to be grown; and more research is needed on ideas for value-added products that can be made from the spent herbs that result from the distillation process.

- [Photo key](#)

- [Photos](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [Overall Garden Plan](#)
- [Final report](#)
- [Recipes](#)

Research

Participation Summary

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture or SARE.



Sustainable Agriculture
Research & Education [US Department of Agriculture](#)



This site is maintained by SARE Outreach for the SARE program and is based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under award No. 2019-38640-29881. SARE Outreach operates under cooperative agreements with the University of Maryland to develop and disseminate information about sustainable agriculture. [USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.](#)