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May 2023 Newsletter

Lavender Northwest Invites You To Enjoy Lavender All Year Round!



Barn Owl Nursery

May 2023

Things are getting busy on lavender farms all across the Northwest region as farmers tend to their slowly waking lavender plants -- weeding, pruning, and mowing to get the fields ready for a busy season.

May is a great month to find and plant a variety of different lavender plants as well. Local nurseries and growers have many different lavender plants and are ready to answer your questions about the best varieties for your garden!

We hope in the coming weeks you are able to enjoy the warmer weather and play in the dirt!

Featured Lavenders

Chris Mulder

Barn Owl Nursery
Lavandula stoechas
cultivars

Lavandula stoechas varieties are usually called Spanish lavenders in the United States. They are popular to grow in the landscape and in containers because they bloom earlier than other lavenders and their flowers attract bees and other pollinators in the spring. If the flowering stems are cut back after they fade, the plants will bloom again later in the summer. These lavenders grow well in hot, dry locations and are a good choice for drought tolerant gardens that receive full sun.

Spanish lavenders produce fast growing gray-green foliage and flower the first year. All of them have very distinctive compact flower heads topped with two long showy bracts that resemble butterfly wings. *L. stoechas* varieties add long lasting color and stand out in the landscape. They can be planted in the garden with other perennials and herbs that like the same growing conditions. Spanish lavenders grow best in regions that do not have prolonged hard frosts and cold winters. They are deer resistant plants with strong fragrant foliage. Enjoy their long lasting flowers in the garden and in containers on a

LNW Member Announcements

LNW Workgroup Meetings:

Internet Workgroup

Thursday, May 11, 7:00 - 8:00 pm PDT

Community Workgroup

Thursday, May 18, 6:00 - 7:00 pm PDT

Branding Workgroup

Thursday, May 18, 7:00 - 8:00 pm PDT

Capacity Workgroup

Thursday, June 1, 7:00 - 8:00 pm PDT

LNW Member Marketplace:

Looking for local lavender products but don't know where to find them? Lavender Northwest has a great feature on the website! It's the online **Lavender Marketplace**, where you can find which farms sell which products. An easy way to find what you need!

Attention All LNW members:

Volunteers are needed to help in LNW work groups. Please email info@lavender-nw.org to volunteer. We will contact you to let you know where help is needed throughout the year.

Professional LNW Members:

Please update your information and add your spring and summer events to the event calendar on the LNW website.

Events & Classes

Be sure to check our **event calendar** for up-to-date information about what's happening in your area!

You will find LNW members at farmers' markets and at booths at special events. Many LNW farmers sell their lavender products online from their websites.

Another great place to find lavender products from local farms and stores is to check our members' listings on the **Destinations Page** on the LNW website. Find LNW members' farms in Oregon, Washington, Montana and Idaho to see what they are offering in 2023.

Lavender Hydrosol: So Great For Your Dog!

by Beth Hammerberg
Down by the River Lavender
Wenatchee, WA.

Many years ago (by

deck or patio and invite beneficial pollinators to your garden in May, and later in the summer, after other lavenders have faded.

There are several new cultivars available that will survive most winters in Zone 7 in the Pacific NW.

Flower colors range from very dark purple to light purple, and there are blue, white and pink flowering varieties available too. The fresh flowers can be cut and used in floral arrangements.

Spanish lavender plants can be grown in different types of pots and used as floral centerpieces for special events. They make a nice gift for Mother's Day too!



(PC: Wayside Gardens)

***Lavandula stoechas* 'Silver Anouk'**

Height: 18-24 inches

Width: 18-24 inches

Flower Color: Dark purple with light violet top bracts

Zone: 6 (-10 degrees F)

This is the only *L. stoechas* with distinctive silver-gray foliage year round. The large plant has large flower heads on silvery straight stems and top bracts that contrast nicely with the dark purple flowers. The silver foliage provides a striking focal point in the garden all year. 'Silver Anouk' blooms in late spring and will bloom again later in the summer, if pruned back after the first flowers have



recommendation of a veterinarian) I started using hydrosol as an all-natural dog spray. I have three large Labrador retrievers. Their idea of taking a bath is jumping in the river, and then shaking the river water all over you and laying out in the sun to dry.

This can make for some stinky doggies. Pure lavender hydrosol is amazing at neutralizing that odor. As I tell my customers, it does smell a little weird when you first put it on your dog and they're still wet but miraculously every time when they dry all of the stinkies go away!

I have found that applying Lavender hydrosol every three days helps with dandruff, shedding, and shines up my dogs' coats. Hydrosol is also slightly antiseptic and will promote healing of minor wounds and hotspots.

For small dogs especially hydrosol is calming. It is so non-toxic you can spray it around your dog's face, if they'll stand still for it. Otherwise, you can apply it to your hand and then pet them on the head.

Hydrosol spray also works great to deodorize bedding and the air. You can spray directly on furniture and it will not stain.

I've had several people question me about the toxicity of lavender for dogs. Lavender is not listed in the veterinary medicine literature as toxic for dogs or cats when used topically.

I think the confusion lies in the two main components of lavender essential oil being linalool and linalyl acetate. Those terpenes, when ingested in their pure form are highly toxic to dogs and cats. However, in hydrosol and in essential oil those compounds are greatly diluted.

The American Veterinary Medical Association actually recommends lavender essential oil as a natural anti-anxiety tool for dogs who get upset riding in cars. A study from 2006 ([read here](#)) where they applied lavender essential oil to a cotton ball and just had it in the car with the dog showed it was effective at calming the dog's anxiety.

There are some sites that claim Lavender hydrosol is effective at repelling ticks, fleas, and other insects that might bother your dog, but I have not found it effective by itself.

This concludes our series on hydrosol. I hope you have enjoyed this information and give this miracle

faded.



PC: ballseed.com

Lavandula stoechas 'Bandera Pink'

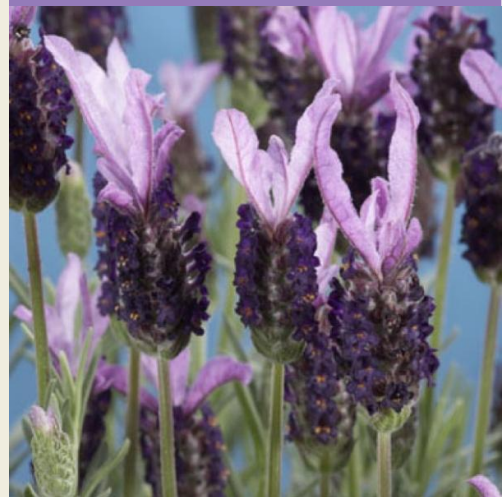
Height: 7-9 inches

Width: 10-12 inches

Flower Color: dark pink with light pink top bracts

Zone: 7a to 10b

This new introduction is one of the smallest growing Spanish lavenders with dark pink flowers topped with contrasting light pink bracts. It has a dense mounded growth habit which makes it especially suitable to grow in small containers and small gardens. 'Bandera Pink' has the advantage of blooming early in the spring for a long period of time. It is self-cleaning and has a full secondary flush of flowers in the summer.



PC: Green Fuse Botanicals

Lavandula stoechas 'Madrid New Purple'

Height: 18-24 inches

Width: 18-24 inches

liquid a try!

Did you know that the Pacific Northwest is home to many lavender-loving authors? The next two recipes come from the book ***Lavender: 50 Self-Care Recipes and Projects for Natural Wellness*** by Pacific NW author Bonnie Louise Gillis, published by Sasquatch Books.

Baked Pear & Lavender Pancakes

Recipe by Bonnie Louise Gillis



(PC: CharityBurggraaf)

If you were to cross a German pancake with a French baked custard, the result might be this deliciously puffy and fruity pancake. For even more dazzle, add some bright pansies, rose petals, or fresh berries to your garnish.

- 1 cup water
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon dried purple culinary (*L. angustifolia*) lavender buds
- 3 large or 4 medium fresh Anjou or Bosc pears
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted and divided
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup light brown or dark brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/8 teaspoon lemon extract
- 1/8 teaspoon fine kosher salt (optional)
- 3/4 cup light pear syrup, reserved from pan
- 1 medium lemon, cut into 6 wedges
- Powdered sugar, sifted, for dusting

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

Flower Color: Dark purple with light purple top bracts
Zone: 7 (0 to 10 degrees F)

This free-flowering, large Spanish lavender has long light violet bracts over deep purple flower heads that bloom in mid spring. A second bloom can be encouraged by deadheading the plants.



PC: Blooming Advantage

Lavandula stoechas **'White Anouk'**

Height: 14-18 inches

Width: 12-14 inches

Flower Color: dark blue flowers with large white bracts

Zone: 6 (0 to -10 degrees F)

This hardy Spanish lavender has large flower heads with dark blue flowers topped by unique, showy, white ruffled bracts that really stand out in the landscape. This lavender is well suited to grow near other lavenders and perennials with dark flowers and foliage to show a lovely contrast in the garden. This variety also grows well in a wide container.

To Amend or Not to Amend

In a medium saucepan, combine the water, sugar, and lavender. Stir to dissolve the sugar. With a sharp knife, core and slice pears about 1/4 inch thick. Add the pear slices to the pan.

Over medium-high heat, bring the mixture to a boil and cook for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and cover. Steep for 10 minutes to infuse lavender flavor into the pear syrup.

Holding a small fine-mesh sieve over a measuring cup, strain 3/4 cup of the syrup into the cup. Set aside.

While the syrup cools, preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Prepare 6 (10-ounce) individual baking dishes or a 9-inch pie pan by spraying the edges with nonstick spray and then coating the bottom of each dish with 1/2 teaspoon of melted butter.

Arrange the pear slices to cover the bottoms of the dishes.

In a blender, whip the eggs on medium speed until frothy, about 30 seconds. Add the flour, brown sugar, vanilla, lemon extract, and salt. Blend until the batter is smooth and thick, about 2 minutes. Stop to scrape the sides as needed.

Add the pear syrup and the remaining 3 tablespoons of butter to the batter. Blend until smooth, about 15 seconds.

Pour the batter evenly over the pears and bake uncovered for 20 to 25 minutes, until golden brown and fluffy. For the 9-inch pie pan, increase the cooking time to about 30 minutes.

To serve, top each dish with a squeeze of lemon juice and a sprinkle of powdered sugar. Garnish with a sprig of lavender and a few berries or edible flowers if desired. Serve immediately.

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Lavender & Cardamom Lassi

Recipe by Bonnie Louise Gillis

A classic Indian lassi can be sweet or savory, made with or without mango or rose petals, but a lassi is always made with probiotic yogurt and aromatic spices. Some call it the world's oldest smoothie.



(PC: snacksandsips.com)

One of the reasons we love lavender is that it is not a fussy, demanding plant. However, there are a few things that we can do to make our lavenders happy, and amending our soil is one of those things. There are a few reasons to amend the soil around your lavender plants: 1) creating favorable soil texture, 2) balancing pH levels, and 3) adding nutrients.

Creating Favorable Soil Texture

Soil texture is an important consideration in lavender health. While the ideal soil texture for lavender plants is loose, sandy loam which contains large particles for air and water to move through, it is possible to amend your soil to create a favorable environment for your lavender plants. Of course, what you will add to your soil depends upon the type of soil that you are wanting to amend. If your soil already is loose and allows for the movement of air and water, then you may not need to amend at all. However, if your soil is heavy and clay-like, it would be important to amend your soil to help create more space for your lavender roots to extend. There are several ways to amend:

- Mushroom compost
- Composted leaves
- Perlite and pumice

Balancing pH levels

Soil pH “measures how many hydrogen ions are affecting



- Lavender Sugar (see recipe below)
- 1 cup plain yogurt or almond milk yogurt
- 1/2 cup unsweetened almond or coconut milk
- 1 ripe nectarine or peach, chilled and sliced, or about 1 cup frozen
- 2 tablespoons pure maple syrup, plus more as needed
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon dried culinary L. angustifolia lavender buds
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

If serving on a warm day, cover and chill the fruit slices in the freezer for a couple of hours or overnight.

Dip the rims of serving glasses in water, then shake off the excess and dip them in lavender sugar.

In a blender, combine the yogurt, milk, fruit, maple syrup, ginger, cardamom, and 1/2 teaspoon of the lavender. Blend on low speed for about 30 seconds, and then increase to medium-high speed for about 1 minute, or until smooth. Frozen fruit may take longer than fresh. Taste and then mix in additional syrup and lavender if desired. When fully blended, the lassi will be flecked with tiny bits of fruit skin and herbs that hold vital micronutrients and phytochemicals.

To serve, pour the lavender lassi into the prepared glasses. Sprinkle with sliced almonds. Enjoy with breakfast or lunch, after a workout, or as an afternoon treat.

Lavender Sugar

A light sprinkling of this floral sugar complements a bowl of fresh berries or peaches, replaces syrup over a plate of your favorite French toast, and gives ordinary oatmeal cookies a dash of extraordinary flavor. And try adding a teaspoon of lavender sweetness to a mug of mint, ginger, or orange-spice tea!

- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon dried culinary L. angustifolia lavender buds

MAKES 1 1/4 CUPS

Into a clean, small spice or coffee grinder, pour the sugar and 1/2 teaspoon of the lavender buds.

Process for 1 minute, until the sugar crystals resemble a fine flour. The consistency will be of superfine sugar (caster sugar in the UK; sucre en

plant roots. The more hydrogen ions in the soil, the more acidic the soil will be” (Bader 116). The pH scale runs from acidic (pH of 0-6) and alkaline (pH of 8-14). Different plants require different soil pH but Lavender plants happen to thrive right in the middle, in a neutral pH soil of 7. To test the pH of your soil, use a pH test kit to help you to determine how to amend your soil in order to achieve that neutral pH.

If your soil is too acidic, add dolomitic or calcitic lime.

If your soil is too alkaline, add sphagnum peat and organic matter. Granular sulfur will also work, but it takes a little longer.

Adding Nutrients

Lavender doesn't need much fertilizer to thrive, but you can add specific kinds of fertilizer to the soil to achieve specific objectives:

Nitrogen: generally, you won't want to add nitrogen heavy fertilizer to the soil since it will promote leaf production, to the detriment of bloom production. However, newly planted lavenders can benefit from a fertilizer that has some nitrogen. After that, nitrogen isn't needed.

Phosphorus: Phosphorus helps with root growth, so adding phosphorus sources such as bone meal or bat guano to your soil in the Spring before your plants bloom can be beneficial.

Potassium: Potassium from sources such as composted fruits and vegetables and kelp meal helps plants deal with stresses such as an extended drought.

Source: Sarah Berringer Bader's [The Lavender Lover's Handbook](#)

poudre in France), which dissolves easily and melts in your mouth the way powdered sugar does, but without any cornstarch.

Taste-test and add more lavender if desired. Process again until incorporated.

Store in a tightly covered container away from humidity.

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Featured Farmer: Lavender Vale Farms

A Mother-Daughter Duo's Passion for Lavender and Nature

McMinnville, Oregon



Lavender Vale Farms, nestled in the rolling hills of McMinnville, Oregon, is a testament to the power of dreams and hard work. Owned and operated by a dynamic Mother-daughter duo, Laura and Holly Flowers, with the help of their husbands Bob Flowers and Jamie Taylor, the farm is a labor of love that began with a shared passion for nature, plants, and innovation.

Holly is still maintaining a full-time job; however the switch from corporate life into the winery industry is more fitting with her newly found

lavender love. After 29 years Laura has retired from Newberg School District and is now enjoying the work on the farm and her passion for sewing.

The Flowers family moved to the farm in 2018, and a lot of excavating and heavy machinery work

needed to be done prior to planting their first lavender plant in the ground in 2019. While all of this was going on, Holly was finishing up her wine-making program and was leaning toward planting grapes; however, her mother Laura had previously had success with 'Phenomenal' lavandin in her garden and suggested lavender be the main focus. Despite her initial hesitation, Holly trusted her mother's intuition and decided to plant the lavender instead of grapes and they haven't looked back since.

Today, Lavender Vale Farm is home to just under 800 plants and 16 cultivars, including *L. x intermedia* 'Phenomenal', 'Sensational!', 'Riverina Thomas', and many others. When asked about their favorite lavender variety, both Holly and Laura agreed that their current favorite is the recently planted 'Sensational!' The exclamation mark is even part of the name, reflecting the excitement that this particular cultivar brings. According to Holly, 'Sensational!' displays beautiful foliage, excellent overwintering ability, the thickest stems they have ever seen, along with very big flowers. This will be their second year in bloom, and the team at Lavender Vale Farm cannot wait to see what they do and how they distill.

For Holly, processing their lavender into essential oil is her favorite part of the lavender-growing process. She is fascinated by the science behind it and remembers the excitement of the first time she used their still. She still gets that same feeling of amazement each time she sees the first droplets of oil begin to gather on top of the hydrosol. Soap has been her favorite item to make with their oil so far, and she has had a great time experimenting and refining her process. As the team at Lavender Vale Farms reflects on their journey toward becoming successful lavender farmers, they have no regrets. While they have had countless "live and learn" experiences, they view each mistake as an opportunity to learn and grow.

When it comes to growing lavender, Holly has a simple piece of advice: join Lavender Northwest as this organization has been one of the biggest contributors to their success. Everyone is so encouraging and willing to share their knowledge, which continues to inspire them and keeps them looking forward to the future.

Along with lavender, **Lavender Vale Farms** also grows mint for distilling and luffas. Luffas have been a lot of fun, as they are unique to Oregon and require a lot of care since they need to be started indoors and protected from frost once planted in the ground. The farm is also excited to be adding two colonies of honey bees this spring and is looking forward to utilizing their own honey, pollen, and beeswax for their bath and beauty products.

Donkeys are another love of theirs. They have five on their farm, ranging in sizes from small to extra-extra-large. People often ask why donkeys? The answer is simple: spend some time with one and you will understand. There is something very special about these creatures and they seem to have the ability to bring calmness and joy to your soul. Farm visitors will soon be able to enjoy them in the pasture right next to the lavender fields.

While waiting for their grand opening, **Lavender Vale Farms** has been focusing on building their Facebook connections and spreading the news of their progress. We can't wait to visit this dream farm and would like to thank Holly and Laura for taking the time to share their amazing farm with all of us!

As we approach Mother's Day, **Lavender Vale Farms** is a tribute to all the amazing mothers out there who inspire us to follow our dreams and never give up on what we love.

Call for Action:

Would you like to see your farm featured in this newsletter? Contact Mike & Sandra Mitchell today at willamettevalleylavander@gmail.com or call/text at (503) 860-8346 / (503) 705-7731. LNW is always looking for member farms, regardless of size or experience, who are willing to share their journey with lavender.

About Lavender Northwest

Check out our beautiful online brochure!

Lavender Northwest is an organization

Become a Member

Have you thought about being a member of Lavender Northwest?

created for the purpose of showcasing and promoting lavender grown in the Pacific Northwest.

It draws upon established regional expertise in lavender cultivation, preparation of primary lavender products, and incorporation of lavender into value-added products.

Through collaborative promotional opportunities, as well as focused educational efforts, *Lavender Northwest* intends to serve its members by offering extended reach to potential consumers, by expanding technical and business knowledge, and by providing support for interested individuals and developing lavender businesses.

Dedicated to the interests of regional lavender growers and product-makers, the organization is structured as a non-profit corporation, and evolved through the cooperation of its progenitors, the *Oregon Lavender Association (OLA)* and the *Washington Lavender Association (WLA)*.

Stay Connected!

Check out our **website** for more information on lavender and its many uses! Be sure to follow us on **Facebook** and **Instagram** for more ideas!

Be part of the conversation!

Do you have a lavender-related recipe, growing tip, photo, or experience that you'd like to share? Please contact

Pam Baker at
pbaker@littlilavenderfarm.com

Did you know that you don't have to be a lavender grower to be a member!

Great things are happening at our meetings. In-person meetings include many educational and networking opportunities like farm tours in our NW region, distillation and equipment demonstrations, propagation and other hands-on workshops, along with many knowledge sharing activities that members are able to take part in.

Being entirely member driven, our association asks for an active membership.

There are two levels of membership: **Professional** and **Associate**.

The **Professional** level is for those with direct ties to lavender grown in the Pacific Northwest, either as a grower, primary product supplier (plants, bundles, buds, oils, etc.), or as a product developer featuring northwest-grown lavender.

A n **Associate** level supports the efforts of Lavender Northwest to promote awareness and expansion of regional lavender growers and product developers and may have a potential business interest involving northwest-grown lavender.

New members enroll on the website **Lavender-NW.org**

And finally, Dear Readers...

“In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt.” ~Margaret Atwood





Lavender Northwest

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