

2025 USLGA Business Operations & Harvest Survey

Key Highlights



- **Respondents:** United States Lavender Growers Association (USLGA) annual survey was launched on September 15, 2025, and received 87 completed responses from a total membership of 442, approximately a 20% response rate, which is considered a standard/good rating with all responses were U.S. based.
- **Demographics:** Lavender farms are distributed across the U.S., with the highest concentrations in California (10%), Wisconsin (8%), Oregon, and Montana (approx. 7%), and the Northcentral, Northeast, and Northwest regions accounting for most responses. The median grower age is 55.
- **Years in Production:** Most U.S. lavender farms are new, with 65% in operation fewer than four years, indicating strong recent growth and an influx of new growers. Mid-range (5–17 years) operations make up 34% of respondents, while very long-term farms are rare, reflecting the recent expansion of lavender as a commercial crop.
- **Member Interest:** Respondents join USLGA primarily for professional credibility, education, and community, valuing access to industry resources, tools, and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing. Membership also provides networking, camaraderie, and promotional benefits, including visibility and inclusion in the USLGA business directory.
- **Engaged in Crop Harvest, Essential Oil Production, or Distillation:** A strong majority of respondents (77.62%) are actively engaged in lavender harvest or distillation, showing that USLGA primarily serves working producers. The remaining 23.38% are emerging or transitioning operations, highlighting the need for support across all stages of farm development.
- **Distillation:** Most respondents distill fresh lavender (37.5%), with 27.5% using both fresh and dried depending on conditions, while a small percentage use only dried. About 30% do not distill, highlighting that lavender distillation is specialized and many farms focus on non-oil products.
- **Bloom Times:** June is the primary bloom-start period for *Angustifolia* (65%) and *x-Intermedia* (57%), with *Angustifolia* often starting in May (24%) and *x-Intermedia* extending into July (35%). This staggered timing helps farms manage risk, balance distillation workloads, and plan for peak labor and agritourism demand.
- **Acres in Cultivation:** Most U.S. lavender farms are small-scale, under two acres, favoring hand labor, careful varietal selection, and high-value direct sales.
- **Plants in Production:** Two-thirds of respondents (66%) operate fewer than 2,000 plants, reflecting the prevalence of small to mid-scale farms focused on diversified income streams. Larger operations (14% with over 4,000 plants) drive commercial-scale production, highlighting opportunities for collaboration, shared infrastructure, and cooperative marketing.
- **Essential Oil:** Eighteen respondents reported 6,353 ounces of essential oil from 18,072 pounds of lavender harvested, with *Grosso* dominating production. Other *x-Intermedia* cultivars contributed moderately, while *Angustifolia* remained a small, premium-volume crop, highlighting *x-Intermedia*'s dominance in U.S. lavender oil production.
- **Hydrosol:** Most respondents (79.41%) do not retain hydrosol, while only 2.94% do, and 17.65% indicated the question was not applicable. Those who retain it reported a combined 683 gallons, showing its potential value despite being largely treated as a byproduct.
- **Harvest Methods:** Over 80% of growers harvest primarily by hand, using sickles (55%) or scissors (18–20%), with mechanized harvesting reported by only 2–3%. Comments highlight grower ingenuity and experimentation with modified or imported equipment, reflecting a gap in purpose-built lavender machinery in the U.S.
- **Debudding Methods:** About 60% of growers debud by hand, with others using machines, cloth methods, screens, or mixed approaches. Most mechanized solutions are self-designed, highlighting labor intensity and a need for affordable, scale-appropriate equipment.
- **Culinary Bud Cleaning Methods:** Manual sifting is most common for cleaning culinary buds, with mechanical methods used by some and 13–14% reporting no cleaning.
- **Products/Services/Sales Distribution:** U.S. lavender farms are highly diversified, offering dried and fresh lavender, value-added products, essential oil, and often agritourism, education, or event services. Sales are primarily direct-to-consumer, complemented by online platforms, events, farmers markets, and social media, reflecting a localized and resilient marketing strategy.
- **Agritourism:** About 40% of lavender farms engage in agritourism, highlighting its role as a diversification and marketing strategy. ADA compliance is uneven, with many farms partially compliant or uncertain, reflecting challenges in making visitor-focused operations accessible.
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- **Revenues:** Lavender farm revenues vary widely, from \$0 to over \$800,000, with many operations still unprofitable. Over half of respondents have not yet reached profitability, reflecting the long establishment period, though some diversified farms achieve six-figures within the first 15 years.