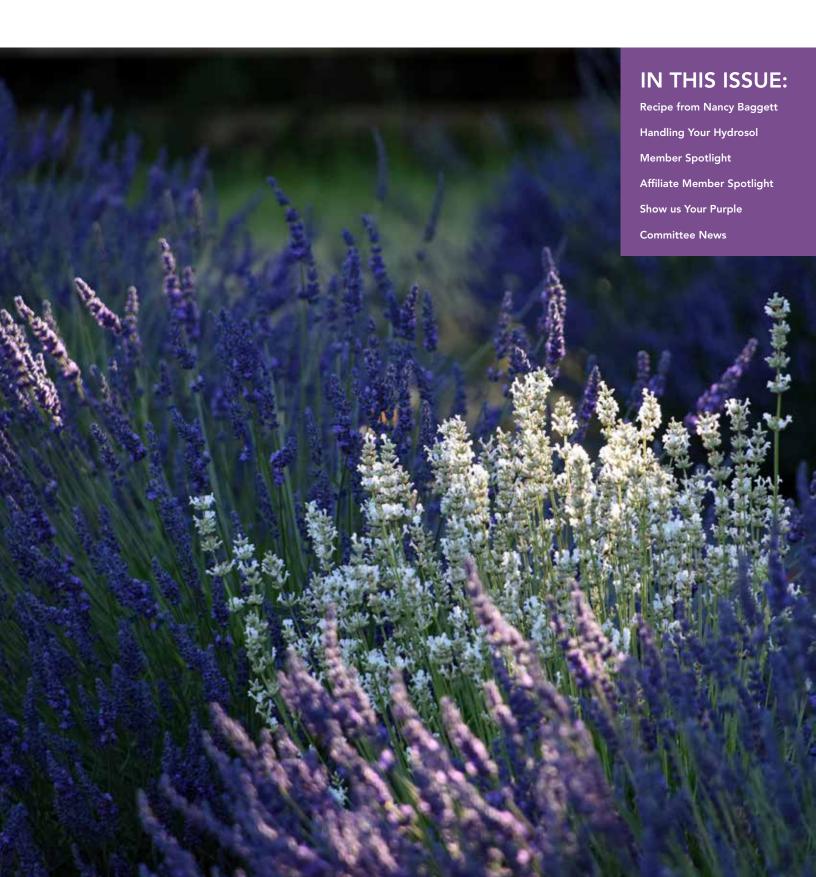
Newsletter



October 2021 Vol. 10 Issue 5 USLGA NEEDS YOU! Volunteer with our organization!



SOCIAL MEDIA

USLGA is on Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram. Follow us!



WEB www.uslavender.org

If you would like to contribute stories, comments, or other content please email editor@uslavender.org

USLGA NEWSLETTER

Past and current newsletters are accessible on www.uslavender.org

COVER IMAGE Interloper Marilyn Kosel Location: Wayward Winds Lavender Newberg, Oregon

WE WANT YOUR PHOTOS: Please submit your lavender and farm photos to be considered in future newsletters and USLGA's social media at: editor@uslavender.org

Submission deadline is the 15th of the month pior to publication. The newsletter is distributed bi-monthly.

MISSION OF USLGA

To support and promote the United States lavender industry through research, education, networking and marketing.

VISION OF USLGA

As a collective voice for members, the United States Lavender Growers Association will advocate for, promote, and support and United States lavender industry. The USLGA will offer opportunities for members to participate in and benefit from networking, education and research. It will seek marketing opportunities to raise awareness of the lavender industry, connect buyers to sellers, and enhance member farms and businesses. The USLGA will support growers in producing a quality sustainable lavender crop and end products to satisfy U.S. demand and will be a partner in the global lavender community.

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Letter from the Editor

I'm perpetually optimistic. Every summer I falsely believe that my busy schedule will slow down come fall and winter. In the fall and winter, I believe I will have things more under control the following spring and summer so I won't be so busy. None of that becomes reality. My schedule does ease somewhat now and then, but is surprisingly busy at all times of the year. I appreciate your patience when the newsletter is a few days late.

This month's issue contains many of the usual features, plus a new one. The Affiliate Member Spotlight was initiated by the PR and Communications Committee and will feature affiliate members whose products and services you may find valuable to your business. There is also an article about handling hydrosol. Until I began formulating products and studying cosmetic chemistry, I had no idea how susceptible our hydrosols are to contamination. Contamination can potentially be harmful to our customers and our businesses. I thought it important to share some information you may not be aware of, and hopefully, help you avoid some potentially costly mistakes.



- Marilyn



BOARD MEMBERS

President - Mike Neustrom Vice President - Sherri Wood Secretary - Patricia Uptain Treasurer - Sarah Richards Julie Haushalter Joseph Downs Sally J Miller Marilyn Kosel Jim Morford

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Advocacy - OPEN Education & Research -Martha Wilczynski Event - Sherri Wood Finance - Sarah Richards Internet - Jessica Mortvedt Membership - Joseph Downs Newsletter - Marilyn Kosel Nominating - Jim Morford PR & Communications - Mary Althoff

Admin Support - Sally Miller Webmaster - Mary Bergstrom

News from the Board

From the President:

As fall approaches, many of our members are still busy in their fields. Many are ramping up for holiday markets. Others are slowing or stopping operations for the year. Whatever this time means for you, I hope this edition of the newsletter will help you with your activities.

A couple of months ago I approached the Board about the possibility of hiring an Executive Director for our organization. We have been hovering around 700 members for several months, and the additional growth has been challenging for our all-volunteer committees to handle. Many of our projects bleed across committees, meaning coordination is imperative. Volunteers have been the backbone of our organization since the beginning. Now volunteers alone are not enough to accomplish our intended goals while dealing with our continual growth.

With the recent change to our regions, the new Learning Center, and other projects, more time needs to be dedicated to keeping track of and wrangling these cats. Hiring an Executive Director is designed to provide real benefits to our members.

I put together an ad hoc committee to develop the position of Executive Director. The position will oversee many of the operations and tasks being performed on your behalf. We have met several times and will continue to meet to hammer out just what will be required for the position and what we can afford. We have identified the need. We are continuing research on just how this hiring can be accomplished.

In the coming months, we will obtain approval from the Board to put out a call for applicants for this position. More information will be provided to our members as things progress. I want to ensure we look internally first before looking outside of our organization. I welcome any thoughts or ideas our members may have on this topic. Our group will certainly consider any input provided. Remember, this is your organization! You can send comments to president@uslavender.org.

Mike Neustrom USLGA President

Help Us Help You!

The USLGA PR Committee can help you promote your business if you'll do the following:

Submit an event

Click HERE to submit your lavender event, which will be viewable by members as well as the public. Simply fill out the details on the form in order to have your lavender event (festival, class, holiday event, u-pick) posted online.

Update your Member Profile

This will allow your farm/business to be accessible on the "Find a Farm", "Find a Supplier" and the "Map of Farms & Businesses" on the public and members' USLGA websites. Click HERE to update your profile now!

Send us any local/national publicity on your farm such as a TV clip, newspaper article, etc. Please send in PDF or video format to pr@uslavender.org.

Share your farm's recipes, interesting lavender uses, backyard gardening tips, and more! Your farm will be credited on the "coming soon" public website feature and in FB posts. Email to pr@uslavender.org

PR will promote your business on the public Facebook page, newsletter, or wherever appropriate.

Free promotion! How can you pass this up?

Remember: USLGA has a public Facebook page, which is separate from the members-only Facebook page. (If you've been viewing the members-only Facebook, you might have forgotten the public Facebook page exists!) PR is initiating a list of activities to make the public Facebook page more attractive, increase activity, and direct the public to visit members' farms, while enlightening them about lavender-related topics.



New book available: Let's Cook With Lavender - A recipe sampler. By Nancy Baggett

In this handy condensed book you'll find 27 of Nancy's most popular recipes. The book also contains general tips on cooking with lavender. If you would like to carry this book in your retail shop go to www.nancyslavenderplace.com for wholesale purchasing information.



INTRODUCING: Susan & Doug Fahlgren Fleurish Lavender of Lost Mountain Sequim, Washington



by Lisa Anthony, USLGA Public Relations/Communications Committee

It seems the stories from lavender growers often begin with, "we started from scratch," but this story ... has a twist! Susan and Doug Fahlgren were initially looking for an Olympic Peninsula retirement haven. Instead, they bought a fully operational lavender farm in 2019, just five days before the farm's festival and had a wonderful time doing so! Five friends flew in from around the country to help them pull it off, and it worked!

It's not quite as whirlwind as it sounds. A year before purchasing the property, Susan found the farm, fell in love, and wanted to buy. Doug wasn't convinced. "It's beautiful, but it's a lavender farm." Susan bargained for a year and worked hard to learn about lavender; visiting farms in California, Texas, and Washington. At the end of her year, the farm was listed again and this time they grabbed the opportunity.

Susan was instantly encouraged when their Super and Hidcote Blue essential oils earned awards at the 2019 Lavender Sommelier-International Lavender Essential Oil Judging.

The Super won a gold award and the Hidcote Blue won a silver. Despite the unique circumstances of 2020, Fleurish Lavender again earned five new awards for their essential oils: silver awards for Royal Velvet, Folgate (late harvest) and Grosso, and bronze awards for Folgate (early harvest) and Super. And these are just a few of the nearly one hundred lavender varieties to be found on the farm.

Fleurish Lavender of Lost Mountain sits on the opposite side of the highway from most of the Sequim area lavender farms, which are near the Strait of Juan de Fuca (Puget Sound). The local hidden gem in Zone 8B is hard at work, making their mark with innovative farming practices. After networking with local farmers and finding success with alpaca manure for new plugs in the ground, Susan and Doug added three pretty alpacas to their farm family. Fleurish is also the first lavender farm on the Olympic Peninsula to grow Riverina Thomas with huge success. This hybrid grew as large as a four-year-old Grosso in its first year.

Though it's off the beaten tourist path, Fleurish Lavender of Lost Mountain is a draw for its exquisite lavender and is also home to an 86-specimen rainbow arch specimen garden and fruit orchard. The 100-year-old moonshiner's cottage-turned-giftshop is open Memorial Day to Labor Day, with online sales available September to May.

As for many growers the weather proves to be Fahlgren's greatest challenge: "You cannot predict anything, but need to be ready for anything." This year Susan and Doug had a wet spring, and the rainfall caused many plants to droop and fold over. However, all these plants had a second bloom. Though the bloom cycle seemed to be about two weeks behind before the heat hit, the heat wave moved them forward four weeks into the season, causing a rush to get harvested.

The 2021 lavender season found Susan and Doug hosting the first festival of their design with an incredibly positive response. Their plans for next year include increasing the volume of their value-added products in the gift shop. Top selling items are essential oil, bundles, sachets, honey, and their bar soap, which has a cult-like following.

Plans for the future at Fleurish Lavender will focus on quality. This means some plants, around 24 years old, will be replaced with new plants. The Fahlgrens have already begun replanting their award-winning essential oil varieties but are still discussing what varieties will be selected for visual interest and purposes of the next phase. As founding members of the Lavender Northwest Association, Fleurish Lavender is also active in building the lavender industry in Washington.

Contact info: www.fleurishlavender.com info@fleurishlavender.com 360-681-2782





Spiced Cranberry-Pear Crumble - a recipe from Nancy Baggett

Nancy Baggett is the author of the award-winning book, "*The Art of Cooking with Lavender*," which is on sale wholesale at www.nancyslavenderplace.com She also writes a free, quarterly Culinary Lavender Newsletter; sign up on her website.



3 cups peeled, cored and diced (1/3-inch) ripe but firm pears, preferably Bartlett

1/2 cup dried sweetened cranberries (or golden raisins, if desired)

3 tablespoons packed light or dark brown sugar

1 1/2 teaspoons lemon juice

1 teaspoon each finely chopped dried culinary

lavender buds and peeled and grated fresh gingerroot

1 cup all-purpose unbleached white flour

1/3 cup granulated sugar

2 pinches salt

5 1/2 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into pieces

Scoops of caramel or vanilla ice cream for serving, optional

Pity the poor pear, which arrives in autumn in abundance, but always seems to play second fiddle to the apple. But not here, where pears are the star, along with lavender and gingerroot. In case you didn't know, this combination is spectacular. Together, lavender and gingerroot seem to magically heighten the normally subtle pear flavor. The cranberries add a bit of texture, color and zing, but you can substitute golden raisins if that's what you have on hand.

This goes together quickly and is pretty much foolproof. I designed it that way because it's a fall favorite and I make it often. I hope you will enjoy it too!

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Thoroughly stir together the pears, cranberries, brown sugar, lemon juice, lavender and gingerroot in a large bowl.

In an 8-inch square baking dish, thoroughly stir together the flour, granulated sugar, and salt, then sprinkle the butter over top. Place in the oven (middle rack) for 5 minutes or until the butter melts. Thoroughly stir the butter into the dry ingredients until evenly incorporated; lumps in the crumble mixture are normal. Scoop out a generous 3/4 cup crumble and reserve for the topping.

Stir the pear mixture into the crumble mixture in the baking dish until evenly incorporated. Spread out evenly to the edge. Sprinkle the reserved crumble mixture evenly over the top. Return to the oven and bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until the pears are cooked through and the topping is nicely browned and crispy. Let stand to cool slightly. Garnish servings with ice cream, if desired, and serve. Makes 4 servings.

Nancy Baggett is the author of numerous cookbooks, including The Art of Cooking with Lavender, and most recently a 24-page recipe sampler called "Let's Cook with Lavender." Both are available wholesale at nancyslavenderplace.com

Handling Your Hydrosol How to properly collect, store, and use lavender hydrosol.

A primer by Marilyn Kosel



Use of hydrosol collected in an outdoor environment is not recommended. The public loved this outdoor demonstration but no hydrosol was kept from the distillation.

If you distill, you have hydrosol. And a fair amount of it. Hydrosol is classified as waste by most large distilling operations. It can be a valuable byproduct if proper procedures for collection, handling, preserving, and use are followed.

The essential oil industry and its by-products are not regulated. They are generally classified as supplements by the FDA. As such, there are no government regulations involved in standardization or regulation. The industry itself has not done a good job of self-regulating either. Anything can be called essential oil as the term has no official definition. This leads to no official means of enforcement as official standards and definitions do not exist.

We may have our standards and generally accepted standards within the lavender industry. Overall, however, there are few reasons for large operations to follow any sort of standard since there is no enforcement. This is how and why you sometimes see "essential oil" available at retailers for an unbelievably cheap price. It's most likely highly adulterated or diluted, and may not even contain what we refer to as essential oil. This is true even if it says "pure" or "100%" or "true" on the label. Educating the public and producing the highest quality essential oil and hydrosol we can is how we can differentiate ourselves. This will also help us garner the higher prices we need to be sustainable.

Maintaining quality standards and integrity in hydrosol production is also important. You may see products on the market called hydrosol that may be floral water (often synthetic) or an infusion, rather than a distillate. Some companies will use the terms interchangeably depending on demand. Or they can label the same product in multiple ways. Though we may not agree with it, this practice is technically not illegal or even dishonest since there are no standards, legal definitions, or enforcement.

To produce a safe, high-quality hydrosol good management practices (GMP) should be implemented. This would include documentation, testing, and having standard operating procedures for hydrosol production, storage, and use. While the effects of regulation on essential oil and hydrosol themselves are not at issue, GMP in manufacturing them is. The Dietary Supplement current good manufacturing practice (cGMP) rule (21 CFR part 111) requires supplement manufacturers to establish and follow federally mandated current good manufacturing practices to ensure the quality of their products. Implementing GMP in oil and hydrosol production, and other aspects of your business is a good idea. Even if you may never be asked to provide documentation.

Hydrosol is nearly 100% water, which provides an ideal environment for microbial growth. Hydrosol may be considered sterile as it leaves the still but that sterile environment is lost the moment the hydrosol is exposed to the environment or a non-sterile container. Outdoor and other situations not tightly controlled lead to airborne pollutants, debris, and other contamination issues. Production methods, packaging, storage, and transportation can all contribute to potential contamination.

Unfortunately, contamination is not always easily identifiable from looking at or smelling the hydrosol. Though some indications of contamination are obvious, like discoloration, a change in aroma, or bloom. Bloom is a ghost-like substance that will usually settle on the bottom of a vessel. When disturbed it will float around in the liquid like a whitish, semi-transparent blob.

Microbial testing is the only way to know for certain that your hydrosol is safe to use. Hydrosol should have less than 1000 CFU (colony forming units) if it is to be used. However you plan to use it, proper handling and testing can add to the cost. This is one reason properly produced hydrosols are more expensive. Samples need to be sent to a lab such as Sagescript Institute for microbial testing.

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To ensure the best possible outcome, your still and workspace would preferably be indoors. Everything should be as sterile and clean as possible. Hydrosol should be caught and stored in sterilized containers, minimizing exposure to the elements. When bottling, leave little or no headspace in your storage containers, and/or top off with nitrogen gas. Store your containers in a temperature-controlled dark space. Refrigeration is preferred, if possible. Glass containers with tight caps are recommended. Amber glass is fine but I prefer clear glass so I can see any discoloration or bloom if it develops. Be sure to store clear glass bottles of hydrosol in a dark environment. It's okay to store hydrosol in plastic temporarily. This is often done for transportation. The hydrosol should not be left in plastic any longer than necessary.

If you are very careful, hydrosol could have a shelf-life of 3-6 months if un-preserved. But the moment you open a container, you have compromised that. Only testing will tell you for certain whether the hydrosol is safe. Preserving your hydrosol is fairly easy, relatively inexpensive, and worth the extra step.

Un-adjusted hydrosol has a natural pH between 3.1-4.5 which is not low enough to be self-preserving. All water-based products require preservation of some kind to be safe. If you are not planning to use your hydrosol within a few days of distillation, preserve it. Follow the procedures below to ensure an extended shelf-life.

It's best to add preservatives immediately after distillation. Adding preservatives to an already compromised hydrosol will not do a bit of good. Citric Acid is the most commonly used preservative for hydrosols. It is gentle, safe, and non-chemical. It also adjusts pH lower. If you want anti-fungal properties, using Potassium Sorbate or Sodium Benzoate in combination with Citric Acid is effective. Add 0,1% Citric Acid and 0,5% Potassium Sorbate or Sodium Benzoate will give your hydrosol a shelf-life of 1-1.5 years if handled and stored properly. Note that this preservation system alone is not adequate in a container that will be opened many times over its shelf-life.

If you plan to use your hydrosol as an ingredient in another product there are some important things to know. Contaminated hydrosol can wreak havoc if added to a cosmetic formulation. Inconsistency in hydrosols due to varietal, distillation method, and other variables can also make it tricky to use. And the pH of both your hydrosol and the finished product is important for safety and stability.

If you are making a "mist" product containing hydrosol, the following will help ensure a safe product. Lavender hydrosol can have a natural pH range not recommended for regular use directly on the skin. And you may have lowered it with the use of Citric Acid. Daily use without adjustment may cause irritation and sensitivity. Adjusting the pH is the best way to avoid this issue. Solutions of Sodium Bicarbonate, NaOH (lye), or L-Arginine are effective ways to increase pH. All are natural ingredients. I don't recommend using a NaOH solution for beginners, but both other methods are fairly easy. Make a sterile solution of 10%-50% ingredient of choice in hydrosol, and slowly add to your larger container of hydrosol until the desired pH is reached. Your end goal is a pH of 4.5-5.5. Citric Acid is a common way to reduce pH and can be dissolved directly into the hydrosol. Once you have adjusted the pH, a water-soluble broad-spectrum preservative that works in that pH range should be added.

When making personal care or cosmetic products with hydrosol as an ingredient, pH becomes a factor again. Most broad-spectrum preservatives have a pH range within which they are effective. Hydrosol cannot simply be added to an existing product (such



Hey! Don't touch that.



A glass funnel style separation system can help maintain a more sterile collection system. Reducing potential contamination.

as a concentration or melt and pour product) without it potentially modifying the pH. Adding additional preservatives will likely also be necessary. The only exception would be a concentrate that is already preserved for dilution. In which case you should adjust the pH of your hydrosol to the desired range before adding it so you don't compromise the preservative. The citric acid or other preservative used in the hydrosol earlier is not adequate for continued preservation when hydrosol is added to other ingredients.

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The pH of cosmetic products designed for everyday application must be compatible with the skin's natural pH of 4.5-5.5. Products must also be compatible with the effective pH range of your preservative choice, which ideally is in the same range. This range is important for consumer safety and product stability. The more "natural" your product is, the more challenging it can be to preserve effectively. Each time you order a raw ingredient, the pH, consistency, odor, color and more can be different. That means it may behave differently in your formulation each time. When I am formulating this type of product (using GMP, SOPs) I like to make the product first, mixing and processing all ingredients. I then check and adjust the pH as needed, adding the preservative(s) last.

Hydrosol, though challenging, can be a wonderful product. After much research and years as a distiller and formulator, I have come to my conclusions about hydrosol and what works for me. As a formulator, I rarely use hydrosol as an ingredient in a product. As a distiller, I keep a limited amount of the hydrosol we produce and, only for specific purposes. The challenges to using it properly, and its inconsistencies mean it's not very practical for us, considering the scale of our operation and the consistency we need. Not mentioning the challenges of creating a sterile distillation process.

For those who have mastered hydrosol collection and handling, I applaud you. May you have much success.

Marilyn Kosel is a product formulator, distiller, and

long-time lavender farmer at Wayward Winds Lavender in Newberg, OR. She shares her many lavender products with other farms through private label, ready-to-label, and bulk product sales.



Properly collected hydrosol should be placed in glass for long term stoage. Glass carboy bottles are available in many sizes for larger storage capacity. Smaller glass bottles are also readily available. Clear glass allows you to visualize obvious contamination like discoloration or bloom but should be stored in a dark place. Amber bottles can also be used. Blue bottles, while attractive, do not offer any UV protection.

Another peek at our new regional map.



Consider volunteering for your regional team!

October Affiliate Member Spotlight - by Mary Althoff, Chair, PR Committee

This new feature in our newsletter will provide overviews of Affiliate Members who supply goods and services to USLGA members. Support them if you can!

Belle Terre Ceramics, San Juan Island Owner: Lauren Jawer

The development of Belle Terre Ceramics started 10 years ago, after Lauren Jawer worked on a Pacific Northwest lavender farm. She incorporated her love of lavender with her skills in ceramic production and product design. Major skills in product design, and a noteworthy fact; Lauren designed scarves for Liz Claiborne in NYC in her former life!

Lauren fulfilled her dream and built a small-batch ceramics studio in the Sam Juan Islands. She designed lavender-themed products to specifically support sales of top-selling lavender products categories: soap, tea, culinary, plants.

Best-sellers, all with exquisite lavender designs, include:

- Soap dishes in 2 sizes, for soap, spoon rest, culinary, jewelry.
- Tea mugs in 12-oz size.
- Vase magnets that hold lavender sprigs.
 - Lauren notes this sells best when displayed with lavender sprig.
- Three starter sets, which include different assortments of magnets, soap dishes, magnets, and tea caddies.

All products are available in deep purple, periwinkle, and white.

Remember, Belle Terre is a small-batch studio, so order early! Four weeks lead time is ideal. Call today for holiday orders!

See the collection at www.belleterreislandceramics.com Contact Lauren at belleterreceramics@gmail.com or 360-317-4468.





Show Us Your Purple

We asked, you answered! Look at these lovely 2021 lavender scenes.



Azul & Vine Farms Eaton Rapids, MI



Bell Rock Farm Kents Shore, VA



Blue Dream USA Frederick, MD



Buffalo Creek Lavender Lexignton, VA



Dawson Farms Cranfills Gap, TX



Crockett Road Lavender Milton-Freewater, OR



Down by the River Wenatchee, WA



Eagleview Lavender Farm Maysville, WV



Door County Lavender Sturgeon Bay, WI



English Acres Farm Amissville, VA



Four Sisters Farm Douglas, KS







Gertie's Lavender Burton, KS



Hope Hill Lavender Pottsville, PA



Lavender Wind Coupeville, WA



Lavender Ranch Each Wenatchee, WA



Iowa Lavender Ames, IA



Irwin Farm at Prospect Hill Knoxville, MD



Kharis Lavender Gaithersburg, MD



Potter Creek Lavender Pulaski, WA



Lavender Bloom Georgetown, KY



Lavender Ranch Crescent Bar, WA



Muddy Creek Archdale, NC



Murphy Creek Grants Pass, OR



Red Oak Lavender Dahlongea, GA



Prairie Lavender Bennington, KS



Red Feather Ranch Greensboro, NC



Sagehill Farm Ontario, OR



Sandy Creek East Canton, OH



Sunny Acres Farm North Scituate, RI



Smokey Cat Federalsburg, MD



Sycamore Farm Monkton, MD



Twilight Lavender Watkinsville, GA



Toledo Lavender Toledo, WA



Walupt Farms Rochester, WA



Shawnee Hills Compton, IL



White Oak Lavender Harrisonburg, VA



Wood Lily's Lavender Woodlawn, TN



Saddle Creek Ranger, GA



Wickham Farm Penfield, NY

What have USLGA Committees been up to? Here is a summary of recent activities:

Advocacy Committee: Currently inactive. Are you interested? Contact us at advocacy@uslavender.org.

Event Committee: Has been focused on putting the USLC 2021 videos onto our new platform. They can now be accessed by conference attendees at the USLGA Learning Center on our website. This new platform will also be home to other educational videos and information. Consideration is also being given to the format and scope of our next US Lavender Conference, but no official new planning had taken place.

Education & Research Committee: Is planning more Front Porch Gatherings and other educational opportunites for members.

Finance Committee: Financials are in good shape.

Internet Committee: Continuing to make key updates to our website. Providing benefit to members and a more easily navigated site.

Membership Committee: Has developed a new regional map and has renamed the regions. State boundries were used to define regions and six regions were created. Postcards announcing the regions were sent to members. Facebook groups are also being consolidated to reflect the new region map. Also held a productive Town Hall Meeting for new members.

Newsletter Committee: The newsletter will continue to be produced bi-monthly. It will contain its regular features, plus articles that are relevant and educational for our members.

Nominating Committee: Dormant until the next election approaches.

Public Relations and Communications: In addition to its regular newsletter contributions (Feature Farm, "Show Us Your...), PR is initiating newsletter spotlights on USLGA vendors in this edition. 4th Quarter will focus on improving Facebook postings to both the Public and Members-only page.

Publications Committee: Reviews and edits all written content created for USLGA including the website, and the newsletter.

Videos of the 2021 US Lavender Conference are now available at the

USLGA Learning Center

https://www.uslavender.org/uslc-2021-videos

