

USLGA

Newsletter



WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

4 new members have joined the USLGA Board.

PURPLE POWER #USLC 2019

Check out photos from Charleston #uslc2019!

February 2019

Vol. 7 Issue 2



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SOCIAL MEDIA

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



WEB

www.uslavender.org

Email USLGA at info@uslavender.org
Share your pictures, stories, comments and ideas.

USLGA NEWSLETTER

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

COVER IMAGE

Beautiful lavender heart wreath.
Photo submitted by Grower Member Mim Klawonn from Country Lavender Farm Hampton, Nebraska.

WE WANT YOUR PHOTOS:

Please submit your lavender and farm photos to be considered in future 2019 newsletters and USLGA's social media at: pr@uslavender.org

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.



Share the gift of lavender
with your valentine!

*Happy Valentine's Day
from USLGA!*

Letter from the editor

Hello USLGA Membership!

I hope many of our Midwest growers weathered well through the polar vortex. Time will tell how our lavender plants did with the sub-zero temperatures! How many days until spring again?

For those that were able to attend the USLC in Charleston, it was incredible to meet many of you and share our love for all things lavender. We hope the membership enjoys some photos included in this issue from the event.

Our Board and Committee members shared some very ambitious and exciting goals for 2019 at the Annual Meeting during USLC that we want you to be a part of. Committees will be reaching out soon to those that shared interest in helping take USLGA to the next level. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to the 2019 growing season.

Finally, we can't wait to see all the unique lavender heart ideas this month online from your shops and farms. Tag your favorite valentine USLGA on Facebook and Instagram!



SENDING USLGA MEMBERSHIP SOME LAVENDER LOVE THIS MONTH OF FEBRUARY. SPRING FEELS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER!

-AIMEE

News from the Board

BOARD MEMBERS

Dennis Hamilton
Aimee Crane
Martha Wilczynski
Julie Haushalter
Ann Davidson
Ginna Gimmell
Patricia Uptain
Wynne Wright
Lee Kleinman
Sherri Wood
Marilyn Kosel
Jim Morford

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Nominating – Mike Neustrom
Membership – Derek Garrett
Newsletter – Aimee Crane
PR & Communications – Aimee Crane
Internet – Sarah Richards
Finance – Julie Haushalter
Event – Joanne Voelker
Education & Research – Ginna Gimmell
Advocacy & Publication – Sarah Richards



Some of our USLGA Board and Committee Members at USLC 2019.

USLGA THANKS YOU

The Board would like to thank the following members who left during 2018: Mary Seek (Treasurer) and Jane DeHart (Vice-President). We would also like to thank those who are leaving at the end of their terms this year: Martha Wilczynski (Secretary), Julie Haushalter (acting Treasurer), and Anne Davidson.

These members have been monumental in moving USLGA forward and we sincerely appreciate their service to our organization.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

The new USLGA Board members were announced at the Annual Meeting held on January 26th at the 2019 United States Lavender Conference in Charleston, SC. We would like to welcome Lee Kleinman, Sherri Wood, Marilyn Kosel, and Jim Morford as new Board members. Congratulations!

Purple Power at #USLC2019



Purple Power at #USLC2019



Day 2 Keynote Speaker Lela Barker



Beekeeping - To Bee or Not to Bee session



Sandpoint Lavender Farm members



Winterton Farms members



Donna Maria and Sarah Richards



McLeod's Lavender member



Basil from Beagle Ridge Herb Farm



Sandra Shuff and Positively Aromatic vendor table



SEE YOU IN 2021

Why Lavender?



Schuyler Isley
Bethel Fields



Grosso rows in August at Bethel Fields.

Welcome to our journey in lavender farming at Bethel Fields. It's a pretty common question around here – Many people have asked us, “Why Lavender?”

Our venture began almost 2 years ago when I left my job in the pharmaceutical industry to stay home with my 2-year-old son. I have an MBA and primarily worked in marketing for 25 years, so I knew there was likely something on the other side of being a stay-at-home mom. My husband, Brett, has a 30-year background in agronomy and ag marketing, so something in the ag industry was a perfect fit for our little, rural farm.

And, rural it is. Our farm is situated in Western Illinois about 45 miles east of the Mississippi River in Bethel Township of McDonough County. In an ocean of corn and soybean fields, we have about 25 acres of tillable farmland broken up into small fields surrounded by a few timber-lined creeks. For the last 7 years, we've put those few tillable acres to work by cash renting our ground into corn and beans. But, with so little acreage, we thought maybe we could explore other options and a few years ago we started thinking about trying a specialty crop.

Being at home, I had lots of time to research and think over our options. Maybe a hops farm? Or, a vineyard? An herb farm? Pumpkins and Apples?

And, then I stumbled across lavender. I've always enjoyed landscaping with summer annuals and perennials, so I was certainly intrigued. Our growing season, climate, and soil type certainly looked like they were a fit for a lavender farm.

Of course, there were a few caveats, but my next discovery sealed the deal—the USLGA! It was certainly encouraging to know that we would have the organization's resources, research, and advice in our corner when starting a new venture. And, the members – that's a story in and of itself! In a short 20-minute phone call to a fellow Illinois member Jan Meier of Sharp's Crossing Farm (whom I had never met), I had an amazing network

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Why Lavender?



Grosso in late September.



Sunrise on the farm (Grosso).

of names, some sound advice, and a gracious referral to attend the Great Plains Region 6 spring meeting.

We made the 7-hour drive to attend that meeting hosted by Mary and Tim at Loess Hills, were completely inspired by more amazing “lavender” people, and we visited the farms of Mike Neustrom and Jim Morford. I guess someday we’ll say, “the rest is history” because we decided to give half an acre of lavender a try.

A key part of our decision surrounded our ability to begin harvesting after the first full year, and we could immediately use our lavender for products and culinary items. Mostly, of all the specialty crops, we chose lavender because it’s unique—it’s

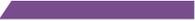
something people want to see. Or, at least, we hope so.

For us, the agritourism side of lavender is a big deal. We believe strongly in sharing what we have – our time, our talents, and our little piece of the world. There’s currently a demand for agritourism in Illinois and lavender has our inquisitive local communities buzzing! We planted 5 varieties in May of 2018 and were blessed to host our first You-Pick event in the fall of 2018 for about 300 guests – in our first season!

We’re excited to see how our plants weather for the second season, and we’ve been so blessed by the warm welcome of the USLGA and its members. Thank you for being an important part of our journey!



**Schuyler Isley, owner
Bethel Fields Lavender
Littleton, IL**



Culinary Lavender:

Hearty lavender baked potato soup with bacon



SINCE IT'S BEEN SO COLD OUTSIDE LATELY, I DECIDED THAT A NICE HEARTY SOUP WOULD BE JUST WHAT WE NEEDED TO WARM UP A BIT. YOU COULD EAT THIS FOR LUNCH OR DINNER ON ITS OWN OR WITH A LOAF OF BREAD AND A SALAD.

Author: Ellen Christian (Confessions of an Overworked Mom)

Recipe type: cooking

Serves: 4 servings

Find online: https://www.yummly.com/recipe/Lavender-Baked-Potato-Soup-with-Bacon-2329350?fbclid=IwAR304aaFwheZdySkk1_pdoSmzjb3VuCjo7nzY5h8O5ZS_eFRClbN1TR4Rj0#directions

WHAT YOU NEED TO MAKE THIS LAVENDER BAKED POTATO SOUP:

Culinary lavender – The culinary lavender really gives this soup an amazing taste. My preference is organic so I know what's been sprayed on it.

Soup pot – You'll want a large soup pot to make this in. I prefer to make a big batch so I have some for lunch throughout the week.

Mortar and pestle – You will need a mortar and pestle to grind the lavender buds.

INGREDIENTS

6 strips bacon, cooked and crumbled
2 medium red-skinned potatoes
2 cups water
2 tablespoons butter
1 small yellow onion chopped
2 tablespoons flour
1/2 teaspoon organic culinary lavender buds, ground
1/4 teaspoon garlic salt
1/4 teaspoon fresh-ground black pepper
2 1/2 cups skim milk
1/2 teaspoon sugar
1/3 cup sour cream
3/4 cup sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Scrub the potatoes. Cut into 1-inch cubes. In a large soup pot, boil in 2 cups of water. Cook until done. DO NOT DRAIN. Remove from heat & set aside.
2. In a small pan saute onion in butter until soft but not brown. Add flour, ground lavender buds, garlic salt & pepper. Mix well and cook about 2 minutes stirring constantly. Set aside.
3. Return potatoes to stove. Heat over medium-high. Add onion mixture, milk, and sugar. Stir well. Bring to boil. Add sour cream & cheese. Add crumbled bacon. Mix well. Reduce heat to low & simmer 15 minutes stirring frequently. Makes 4 servings.

Growing Lavender: a Curriculum for Growers

The **Growing Lavender** curriculum includes on-going support to guide you on your lavender journey. A collaboration of lavender growers and land-grant universities with funding from USDA's North Central Regional Center for Rural Development made this course available.

For Charleston conference attendees, no doubt you heard about the new lavender curriculum that is in the works by a team from Michigan State University, Kansas State University and USLGA. If you weren't there, get ready to put this beginning lavender grower curriculum on your calendar. The curriculum team, led by our own Education and Research Committee, has been working for over a year to develop this self-paced on-line curriculum. Not only is it a one of a kind curriculum co-developed by USLGA experienced growers in partnership with university scientists, it is nearing completion. The anticipated release date is Spring 2019. A big thanks to all those that did a stellar job of writing and reviewing material to bring you the best training possible.

On February 4th, many were able to learn more about the details of this unique collaborative process as well as the curriculum contents via an on-line webinar hosted by the funding agency, the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. The webinar provided an in-depth overview of the motivation for the course as well as introduced attendees to the curriculum designed as a comprehensive introduction to lavender production for beginning growers. The curriculum also extends the opportunity for existing growers to learn from nationally recognized experts. The webinar walked listeners through the curriculum topics and introduced a few of the lavender growers and researchers who contributed their expertise and experience to this project. Twenty-seven persons attended the webinar live, but you can view the presentation which is now archived. All you need to do is click on the following link to learn more about this curriculum. You can find the webinar presentation at:

https://www.canr.msu.edu/ncrcrd/webinars/chronological_archive/

For more information about the webinar or the curriculum, contact Wynne Wright at wright325@msu.edu.



Braided Lavender Heart



A perfect craft to do this summer as you need fresh lavender. Save this page as you plan for your 2019 season!



Supplies needed:

- **12 stems of fresh lavender in bud**
- **one 24” strand of green florist wire**
- **ribbon or twine**
- **binder clip**

- 1) Start with 12 stems of lavender in the bud stage. You can mix varieties or just use one variety for different looks. The size of the finished heart will depend on the stem length.
- 2) Strip off any leaves or side stems.
- 3) Line up all 12 stems so that the base of the flower buds align. Fold the wire in half and wrap it around the base of the group of flower heads and twist it two or three times.
- 4) Divide the stems into two groups of six with one piece of the wire on each side. Clip one side with the binder clip and work on the other.
- 5) Divide the first group of six stems into three sets of two stems. Take the piece of florist wire and spiral it around one of the sets of two stems, from top to bottom leaving a piece of wire to dangle at the bottom of the two stems.
- 6) Begin braiding the stems from the top (flower end) down to the bottom. Use the extra wire to secure the base of the braid.
- 7) Repeat steps 5 & 6 with the other side.
- 8) Shape the two braids to form a heart with the flower heads hanging in the center of the heart.
- 9) Secure the two braids at the base with wire.
- 10) Insert one end of a paper clip under the wire loop and hang the heart to dry for a week or so.
- 11) Wrap the base of the heart with ribbon or twine.
- 12) Make a loop to go around the flower heads to hang.

Enjoy!

Diane Allen
Lavenlair Farm
Whitehall, NY