



Front Porch Series – Fast Facts

Event Title: **Lavender Personal Products**

Session Details: June 22, 2023, 8pm E.S.T. Supporting slides and Fast Facts Summary can be found [here](#).

Featured Presenter: Sarah Richards – Lavender Wind Farm

Sarah founded Lavender Wind Farm in 2000, starting with 400 plants. After 23 years she sold the farm portion of her business retaining her manufacturing/retail store. She is a founding board member of the United States Lavender Growers Association.

Facilitators: USLGA Education & Research Committee, Barbara Cesiro & Mary Pilotte

Tech Lead: Jenny Connors

Event Goal: Selecting resale products that are right for you and your business is an important step for commercial lavender farmers. Unless you exclusively wholesale raw production, creating the right line of personal products is strategic and valuable. This webinar reviews a wide range of Lavender Personal Products from a production and marketing perspective allowing you the opportunity to make appropriate choices for your business.

Terms used during the event:

- **Agritourism:** a form of commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism to attract visitors onto a farm, ranch, or other agricultural business for the purposes of entertaining and/or educating the visitors while generating income for the farm, ranch, or business owner”, (p1, Agritourism Overview - National Agricultural Law Center (nationalaglawcenter.org)).
- **Household Products:** Items in your product offering expressly developed for use in the home, which could include linen sprays, room deodorizers, hydrosols, themed linens, etc.
- **Mark-up:** The amount (in % or absolute dollars) you add **on top of** the purchase price of an item acquired or the actual cost of production for a “home-made” item, to establish the *new* resale/sale price to your target customers.
- **MSDS:** Material Safety Data Sheet, is a written document that provides information and handling procedures for chemicals/materials. It allows users of the material to understand safe handling and disposal information. Ref: [Hazard Communication Standard: Safety Data Sheets \(osha.gov\)](#).

- **Personal Care Products:** Items in your product offering expressly developed for use on humans, which could include hand lotions, lip balms, soaps, aromatherapy essential oils, etc.
- **Preservatives:** An agent or chemical used to prevent contamination, deterioration, and spoilage formed by bacteria and fungi (Microorganisms) ([Preservative Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster](#)).

Key Points Summary:

- Planning: It's important to know the target you are aiming for in any business endeavor. What are your plans?
 - Audience response: 36% of audience respondents are dreaming of a shop, while 45% have one on site, and 18% have an "off-site" shop. 58% have an online shop, with 97% of those having their own site, 15% on Etsy, and 9% utilizing some other online seller.
- Goals: Clarifying your business/personal goals will offer you better insight into setting up and operating your business. What are your goals?
 - Audience response: 47% of audience respondents are aiming to participate in Agritourism, while 44% desire to create a regional/national business. 28% desire to stay small to avoid needing extra help, and 22% are looking for ways to augment their farm business.

Identifying your customers is important – do they align with your values? Who do you want for customers?

- Audience response: 59% of audience respondents want ALL customers; 35% "earthy" people; 29% Upper income; 24% Younger people; 21% Older people; 18% families or city dwellers; 12% animal loving people.
- Planning location: What is special about your locale? How would you describe your unique style? That style will attract different types of customers (i.e. Home-based shop, vs. brick & mortar, vs. Farmers Market, etc.
- Planning Products: What would you like to make or have the talent/time to make? You may want to consider purchasing some items to expand your offering. What items do you already make?
 - Audience response: 88% Sachets; 65% Personal Care; 53% Food; 53% Hydrosol; 47% Essential oil; 24% Unprocessed crop.
- Mark-up: Items (purchased or made) must have mark-up added. ***Pro Tip***- "Keystone" rule of thumb for markup is double the cost; don't underprice – experience shows higher priced items sell better than underpriced items, demonstrating a level of confidence of the product value to the consumer. Food products must be marked up more competitively (only 33-40%). *Ref. point of sale document in slides for examples.* ***Pro Tip***- UPC codes must be developed if you want to sell to larger retailers; batch numbers should be developed to enable tracking product which is produced, in the event of a quality/safety issue.
- Inventory Supply: How you display your product (stark/modern vs. plentiful/varied, etc.) focused on your target consumer will dictate your needed inventory levels. ***Pro Tip***- Offering food, alcohol, or nursery plants in store may require special local/state permitting and licenses. Contact local agencies for assistance; get informed!
- Making your shop special: Build on what your local area is known for. Can you incorporate elements of that into your offering? Are there local artists to bring into your operation in some way? Local foods, orchards, etc.?
- Ingredient/Inventory tracking: Ingredients matter, and offerings are not yet uniform in the U.S. supply chain. The ingredients in your products will affect what will/will not sell. ***Pro Tip***- If producing an item, you must retain the MSDS sheet for each ingredient sourced/used. Consider using "[Air Table](#)" to support your tracing of items, including certification of analysis, MSDS's, etc.

- Ingredient rules: A wide variety of considerations and issues apply based on the raw materials chosen for your products (e.g., essential oils, essential oils, waxes/butters, preservatives, etc.). What are the concerns and needs of your target customers (e.g., age vs. environmental concerns, etc.), and choose appropriately. Aromatic preferences are personal and unique. Resources such as the USLGA wholesale list can be a great help in finding and determining the best supply, as can Indie Beauty Network, Wholesale Supplies plus, Lotion Crafters and more (see slide show for live links). ***Pro Tip***- USE preservatives, period. Protect your customers.
- Food & Drink items: What do you have time and interest in offering? Can others provide items you would never have time to provide? Do you have the understanding/means to meet local kitchen/food prep requirements? Alcohol has unique licensing and related concerns.
- Employees/Associates: Will it be just you/family/friends supporting your operation? Can you do it without burn out? Will you have associates? Treat them well, it will pay off.
- Resources/Supply chain: See slides for a wide range of supporting sites/lists/blogs. USLGA Wholesale Vendor list is a great resource for “white” or private labeled products that are available.
- Tools: See slides for a wide range of supporting sites, including Air Table referenced above.

Q&A Summary:

- Not all hydrosols sold have preservatives in them. It varies by operator and their set-up and approach.
- REFERENCES are provided as part of the presentation slide deck.
- Making a choice of pop-up store, over brick/mortar, vs. Farmers Market is really one of timing, opportunity, preference and investment thresholds/limits.
- Local health departments are a good source for rules in your area, particularly in regard for materials used (local/artisan bees wax, etc.) County extension agents can be helpful regarding food preparation, but less so in other area. Contacting the bee keeping communities in USLGA may be a helpful resource.

Other Session Notes:

Attendees - 58