

# Lavender Link

Quarterly newsletter for Association members

Issue 66

Autumn 2017

GROSSO—FRENCH STYLE

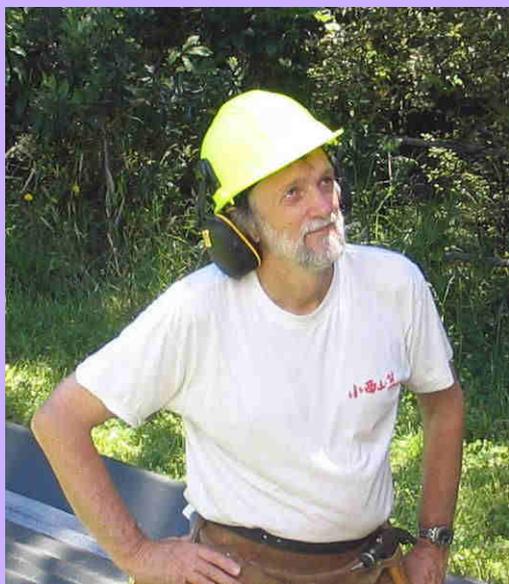
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# Chairman's Chatter



TO RESEARCH, DEVELOP  
AND PROMOTE LAVENDER  
ESSENTIAL OIL AND  
ASSOCIATED PRODUCTS  
OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY

## Chairpersons Report March 2017

For many of us in the north Island it has been a very wet spring and summer resulting in lower yields and loss of Lavender plants. For myself at Great Barrier Lavender we have lost about 1/3 of our plants so it will be a case of replanting with improved drainage. The northern group recently had a meeting in Dargaville at Bindy's which was very well attended. Much information was shared and learnt. These meetings are of great value to new and long-time members. I would encourage our other regions to become more active and have the occasional meeting. It is from these meetings that the executive learn what the membership need and in which direction we need to move.

### Website

Through our [www.Lavender.org.nz](http://www.Lavender.org.nz) website we have received many membership enquiries and for information about growing lavender. The website is certainly proving its worth and we are continually looking for ways to improve it and for it to be a useful tool and resource of information for our membership. If you are running any events on your farm or open days and want some extra advertising please let me know and I will put it up on the website. All ideas are gratefully received. Remember to update your profiles and categories. Categories are a great way to let the public know what services you offer. If you need any help to set these up just drop me an email or phone.

### Oil analysis.

We have arranged with the University of Auckland to carry out our Oil analysis. General Information will be available shortly on our website under "Services" with full details once you have logged in. We will also be offering some incentives to encourage members to use this service. Oil analysis in addition to the Oil awards will tell you a lot about your oil characteristics. We are also considering carrying out some research to characterise by GCMS the lavender varieties and information on understanding GC (Gas Chromatography) results.

It is very pleasing to see many initial enquiries about growing lavender leading to new memberships. A special welcome to you. I hope you get a lot out of your Lavender enterprises and please seek help and advice from members nearby if needed. We are all here to help. Our two main events later this year will be the oil awards and AGM. These are important events in our calendar and I would encourage all members to get involved.

All the Best  
Peter

# From the Editor

Hi everyone

As I write it is raining again in the north.  
I have never seen rain so heavy in Auckland before.  
Something funny is definitely going on with the climate.  
There are those who say that climate change isn't a thing.  
I bet some members would beg to differ.

As we have battled very wet conditions, those in the South have experienced drought and earthquakes and are still hanging in there.

This is reading like some bizarre version of the end of the world, floods, earthquakes, drought. What next? Locusts?

Whatever nature throws at them members seem to be in good heart despite the challenging weather.

If you haven't already, please take a look at the NZLGA face book page. Lots of great videos, photo and information on what's going on regionally.

Good to also see the membership steadily growing. Bringing new ideas and hopefully new oil judges.

Please consider Russell's letter on page 4 as we need some new noses for the oil awards.

Helen

## A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Daniel Langner, D & L Langner Partnership,  
Northland

Barbara-Lee & Neville Cook, Lavender Belle,  
Cambridge

Helma Hughes, Apiti Lavender and Herb  
Farm, Fielding

Elizabeth Stockley, Lavender Grove, Hastings

Tracy Voice , Ranui Essentials, Martinborough

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### *The Lavender Link*

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**As the content of The Lavender Link is subscribed, comments made and advice given may not necessarily represent or reflect the policy or opinion of the New Zealand Lavender Growers Association.**



# Oil Judges Needed

## LETTER TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE NZLGA

### AN OPPORTUNITY TO TRAIN AS AN OIL COMPETITION JUDGE

Dear Members.

We have reached the stage that we need to appoint two or three new judges for our oil competition. It is healthy and inspirational to see a number of our members taking away awards for their entries as they compete with their oils. The growth of entries from overseas growers is also very encouraging.

Margaret Chandler wrote an excellent article on the culture of what it is to be an oil judge. It is included it again on the following page for your information and inspiration. If you think you have a discerning nose, why not consider using it as a service for others?

A training day for budding new judges is to be held at Dr Noel Porter's home, 33A Merrin Street, Christchurch on Saturday 10th June, 10.00 – 3.00. If you are interested and would like to be considered for training as an oil competition judge, please send your response to me as the Convener of the Oil Competition Committee, as soon as possible. We have room for 5-6 people.

If selected for training, you will need to make your own way to Christchurch for the training day. If you are travelling by air, return airfares will be refunded to you if you are selected to be trained.

It's important to understand that this event is for training only and the new judges needed will then be selected from those who are trained. Those selected will be informed after the event and will be expected to be available for the oil competition. This is to be held Friday 4th August from 6.00pm until Sunday 6th August, late afternoon depending on the number of entries to be judged.

Food, accommodation and transport will be provided from and back to Christchurch airport for the judges.

If you have any questions about this opportunity to have your nose trained for service in our association, please get in touch with me.

Convener of Oil Committee  
Russell Rofe  
501 Upper Hook Road, Waimate, 7978.  
Phone 03 6895510



# Experiencing the Lavender Oil Judging Process – From the Judging Side

It has taken a while for me to find a comfort zone with judging lavender oil.

I initially thought I needed to understand the plant chemistry; remember the scientific names for the notes I was smelling; and be able to attribute any 'off' notes I detected to the terroir, the weather, the harvesting, the distilling, the storage or any other variable that could impact on the aroma of the oil. I now feel comfortable in the realization that it doesn't matter if I do not have that technical knowledge as there are other senior judges who have that ability to name the different notes and to attribute possible and probable causes for any off notes detected.

My comfort zone improved greatly once I accepted that all I had to do was develop my confidence in my own capabilities, and to learn from the senior judges about whether an oil is a good example of its variety and to benchmark the oil samples to the standard of what it should smell like.

My judgement of whether an oil smells good; seems balanced; has clear notes; and the right intensity, has developed from the experience of being able to compare the oils, back to back, during the oil judging process. This has provided the best learning experience for me to differentiate and benchmark each sample to the expected standard. However, each year, I am always very relieved that we have the time made available to refresh our noses with the expected standard for each variety of oil! I am also very appreciative of the supportive, constructive and helpful guidance that is provided by the senior judges.

The judges actually play a small part of the entire oil awards process. In fact all we do is swan in to Christchurch on the Friday, get looked after and waited on hand and foot, sniff the lavender then take off back home on the Sunday night. For us to be able to do that though, there is a huge amount of work undertaken behind the scenes by the small dedicated crew who put the process together. The entire weekend runs like clock work because of the preparations by this team. Such as notifying and sending the documentation and information to the lavender growers regarding entering the oil awards, confirming the judges participation, booking the venue, arranging the accommodation, catering for the weekend, preparing the oil samples and computerised systems in readiness for the judging, plus many other tasks that I am probably unaware of that happen in the background to make the weekend successful.

Since the oil judging has been held and organised by the team in Christchurch, the venue has been a community hall in a quiet country lane (except for the odd noisy train dashing past the windows), and provides quite a good layout for the requirements of keeping the judges separate from the 'back room' where all the oil samples are sorted into the different categories and computers are set up for entering the data from the judging. The catering team have a pivotal kitchen and dining area set up between the two areas and do a sterling job of keeping everyone fed and watered throughout the weekend.

Being an oil judge is a big responsibility. As a judge I appreciate that lavender growers are keen to have the best oil possible as a result of all their hard work and enthusiasm and I recognise they have entrusted their oil to the judging process for confirmation about how good their oil is perceived to be. Having judgement results that confirm your oil is really good would be inspiring and uplifting, but if the judgement result indicates the oil is not thought to be so good, that could feel devastating. I take that seriously and try to be constructive and positive in my comments about the oil.

The judges have no idea whose oil is being judged and the scrutineer oversees the exclusion of the judges from any information in the 'back room' as well as ensuring there is no collusion between the judges during each judging of an oil sample.

The judges are also judged throughout the process. The spreadsheets and reviews of the data will highlight any judge who is a constant 'outlier' in their judgement, and this can alert the organisers to take action to rectify the situation. It is comforting to know that over the last few years, the spreadsheet has been providing confirmation that each judge is a contributor in their own judgement and their differences do not skew the result, rather they reinforce the result.

From my experience, the judging teams have always been a collection of very different people with very different backgrounds and levels of judging experience, but drawn together by the love of lavender. Some oil judges may be born with the skill, but really, I think if you are a lover of lavender and are willing to accept instructions and mentoring on improving your 'nose' capabilities, then oil judges can be developed.

New judges are needed to maintain a pool of expertise and to ensure there is a dynamic judging team. I know the request has gone out to Association members before to consider putting themselves forward for the task, but it is also something that I would reiterate as being of great importance that we continue to have new blood (or noses) to add to the team. Time wise – one weekend out of the year for all the wealth of expertise gained in learning about lavender. What better way to enhance your credibility as a lavender oil producer? How good is that? Apart from that – it is a fun weekend away with a great team of people who are all intent on providing lavender growers with a professional forum to benchmark their lavender oil and provide recognition for the best oils. It is pretty incredible to be part of that team.

Margaret Chandler  
Lesnie Lavender

From Link No 65 Nov 2016



**NZ LAVENDER GROWERS ASSOCIATION  
SUPREME OIL AWARDS  
ENTRY FORM: 2017**

Please read entry requirements before filling out this form  
& return this form with your entry!

Entrants Name:  
Trading Name:  
Address:

Phone/Fax:  
Email:

Categories Entered: (please tick the relevant years)

<b>Angustifolia:</b>	2015	2016	2017
1. Pacific Blue			\$
2. Avice Hill			\$
3. Violet Intrigue			\$
4. Other			\$

<b>Lavandin:</b>	2015	2016	2017
1. Grosso			\$
2. Super			\$
3. Impress Purple			\$
4. Other			\$

<b>*Blends:</b>	2015	2016	2017
1.			\$
2.			\$
3.			\$
4.			\$

TOTAL: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Blends may be mixtures of Lavandins &/or Angustifolias, therefore, please name the cultivars included, in the blank spaces provided above, with e.g. #1. Super/Grosso, or #2 Impress/Pacific Blue etc.

**I/we:..... Have Read, Understand & Agree to the conditions of entry listed & have included a remittance of:**

**Acceptance Signature:..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**(Being my/our entry fees for the 2017 NZLGA Supreme Oil Awards).**

## (Please **Retain This Page For your Reference**)

### Details of entry:

1. Full entry is open only to financial members of the NZLGA & International Applicants as approved by the committee, which will be permitted entry under a specific “International Oils” class.
2. Costs are: NZ\$42 per initial entry & NZ\$32 per subsequent entry.
3. Method of payment is to be by Cheque/Bank Draft: made out to the NZLGA Supreme Oil Awards. (Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for receipt purposes, if required).
4. Delivery address: Keith Brown  
240 Stanton Road  
R.D.2 AMBERLEY  
7482  
NORTH CANTERBURY
5. Please ensure that all entries are suitably packaged for freight, each bottle is labelled correctly & include the entry form above. Breakages occurring during freight, will be notified, but remain the entrants responsibility.
6. Oil entries can be from the **Oil Distillation Periods of the “Summer Season”** of: 2015, 2016 or 2017. (i.e. Distillations from “say” Nov 2016 to March 2017, are entered as the 2017 Summer Season).
7. Members may only have one entry per year per cultivar. e.g. Grosso Oil:  
1 x 2015, 1 x 2016, 1 x 2017. **But not 2 x Grosso entries for 2017, etc.**
8. Bottle sizes to be 10 or 15ml, **complete with dripulator & containing the exact amount specified on the bottle WITH AIRSPACE FOR EXPANSION OF OIL DURING TRANSIT.**  
**Note if your oil has been in a fridge it will expand as it warms up.**
9. Each bottle entered is to be clearly labelled with cultivar name & year of distillation.
10. For references purposes, can you please indicate the year of planting of the cultivar, for the oil samples, on a “plain” label. It is not necessary to use your commercial labels, as these will only be removed/masked over anyway.
11. Close off date for entries: **1<sup>st</sup> August, 2017** (late entries will not be accepted).
12. Gas Chromatography (**G.C.**) **Testing is not required.** (But oils may be randomly tested at the discretion of the NZLGA, Oil Awards Committee).
13. Judging will take place 5<sup>h</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> August & the results announced at the AGM later in August & published in the following “Lavender Link”.
14. Winning entrants may be requested to be available for Publicity Purposes. This will be done on a regional group basis following the awards. The judges’ decision will be final and will not be subject to review in any court.
15. Ownership of the submitted oils: It is the decision of the organising committee that all entries become the property of the Association, to form a database for research & a library of NZ Oils (these will be retained for a period of 5 years). Oils may be returned to the entrant at the committees’ discretion, by arrangement, but not until after the AGM & at the entrants’ expense.
16. **Only signed entries will be accepted.**
17. NZLGA does not accept any responsibility or liability for any loss or breakage of samples or any other loss or damage (including loss of market or profit) suffered or sustained by any entrant and arising directly or indirectly from their participation in the Supreme Oil Awards.

If you require any additional information please contact the Oil Awards Convener Russell Rofe email [hookbush@maxnet.co.nz](mailto:hookbush@maxnet.co.nz) or phone 036895510 or contact, Keith Brown, email [keithbrown@clear.net.nz](mailto:keithbrown@clear.net.nz) or Text 02102779358

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# Northern Regional Meeting

On Saturday 11th March the Northern Region was scheduled to have its first meeting of the year at the Northern most members' property in Dargaville.

Bindy and Ray are growing lavender on a pretty damp piece of dirt about 2 metres above sea level on the outskirts of town.

I had been to their place last year to see the initial plantings and to hear their plans for stage two.

I have been growing lavender on some pretty crap soil that has a tendency to wet for four years successfully but this last year was so wet we lost 10 - 15 % of our grosso. And so I was keen to see what they were doing. Impressive!!

Marion and I travelled to Dargaville on the Friday in weather that deteriorated the further north we got. Got to my brother's place at Arapahui in the pouring rain thinking the next day was going to be fun and muddy. Saturday dawned dry if not fine and stayed that way until after our meeting.

A good turnout saw 10 members visit giving 12 at the meeting. We started with a walk around in case the weather turned nasty.

What a change! Land that was uneven with potential puddle all over had been filled with whatever soil Ray could find. Rotary hoed, the top soil scraped off, the land levelled, top soil back on and a pumpkin moulder used to create the mounds for planting. With all the rain that had fallen there were a few puddles but some fine tuning will fix that. They now have the ground ready for about 7000 plants of which Bindy has propagated about 3000 for this year and the rest will go in next year.

The plants from last year's plantings are a little varied in size but seem to be doing well. A well thought out approach to a not easy property. We wish them all the best and look forward to seeing their lavender again in the future.

As Marion and I headed back to Arapahui the rain started again kept up most of the night and we left earlier than planned as the flood waters were rising. The drive back was atrocious and the rain only eased as we got to Hamilton and stopped by the time we got back to Pirongia. Despite the weather a thoroughly enjoyable trip and a pleasure to see a couple so keen to achieve their dream.

The Northern Region is thriving  
Mike



# Make your own Talcum Powder

## Talcum Powder the natural way.

This makes one cup, just scale up to make more

¼ cup Arrowroot powder

¼ Cup Rice Flour

¼ Cup Corn flour

¼ Cup Kaolin Powder available as white clay from pottery supplies, or you could use another flour such as potato flour.

1 tsp Orris Root – this 'fixes' the scent so it doesn't fade or you could use benzoin powder or not include if you can't find either.

5mls of Lavender Angustifolia Oil – I use Avicé Hill, Pacific Blue or Maillette.

In a bowl mix the powder ingredients together, I use my hands wearing gloves, it's less messy as the Arrowroot and Cornflour fly around in the air a bit when you use a fork, possibly wear a mask also.

Once this is mixed thoroughly I add the essential oil drop by drop, mixing in again with my hands to remove any lumps.

That's it!

I use a funnel to put them into talcum pots, but you could also just put into a pretty bowl and make a 'puff' to dispense it with.

P.S This is also Gluten Free, and Vegan too.

Recipe kindly provided by Charlotte Brown at Herbal Visionz

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# Lavendyl Bounces Back

It's been a bit of an eventful year at Lavendyl. Having spent last year learning the basics, both of lavender farming and running the property, we looked forward to putting all we had learned into practice. We started in September with pruning some seriously neglected Violet Intrigue. Jeremy, our French HelpX, was convinced he and Alasdair had killed it off but time proved him wrong. As you can see the pruning was radical.



All was going well until the early hours of the 14<sup>th</sup> November. We were lucky in that there was comparatively little damage, the main areas being the distillery and the shop. The unit in the foreground usually touches the centre pole in the shop. It moved across the floor and only two items on it were broken, most things staying in place including those on the small glass shelves.



Despite being tossed around a bit, and having an uneven floor beneath it, the boiler itself was undamaged and we were able to distil. The hydrosol tank did not fare so well so we have had to resort to plastic containers. That is probably a better long term solution. Douglas is already drawing up plans for a new still pot using the usable part of the tank.



The gardens bloomed beautifully and the severely pruned bed put on enough colour to be seen from the air (bottom left of bottom right bed).



It has been a very quiet season as far as visitors are concerned. We have operated at around 20% of last year's income and are awaiting the re-opening of SH1 to the north with bated breath. However, the wildlife has been present in great numbers and with fewer human visitors we have had time to enjoy them.



For us the best part of this year was Xmas. We had time to enjoy it because we were not so busy and my daughter came from Europe to stay with us. This would not have happened without the earthquake so it is an ill wind...



Heartfelt thanks to all who have helped us since we bought Lavendyl – we wouldn't be here now without you. If you're in the area, please call in. Visitors are always welcome.

# Distilling at Herbal Visionz

## Our Distillation Season at Herbal Visionz Lavender

So far– in Amberley and just north of us we have experienced a 3 year drought, so we weren't expecting a lot from our Angustifolia lavenders.

We had managed to avoid our usual late frost however and picking was on schedule for boxing day or the week after. As it happened we didn't pick until 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2017 and the crop itself was quite heavy with big fat flower heads, long stalks, and the oil yield our best yet!

Angustifolia – 22mls/kilo which is 4mls/kilo more than last years yield and rivalled our Lavandin yield which was down compared to last year. In all we produced nearly 14 Litres of oil which is a record amount for us. Last year by comparison was only 8 Litres.

In fact most of the people who distil with us reported improved yields from previous years.

I must admit our lavender did look spectacular in flower this year. Lovely rich colour on exceptionally long stalks, especially our L. intermedia 'Impress Purple' which is popular as a cut wedding flower or for dried bouquets.

I am guessing that what little moisture we got was just at the right time and plenty of sun helped too, a good recipe for a good yield and time will tell for quality. They sure smelled good this year when we harvested with our new 'vintage' harvester- its one of a kind, a bit quirky but it does the job. To see that working go to the NZLGA face book page – I have put a video on it for you.

P.S 60mls of rain recently has broken the drought and farmers around us are sowing their crops while the soil is moist. We have some very confused fruit trees this year also – our pears are in flower again –they must think its Spring poor things! Some bulbs are sprouting from the ground too.

Just a final note, we processed 10,948 kgs and produced for our customers 218 Litres, this includes some other herb oils as well as lavender, which we did prior to the lavender season last year and after the lavender season finished this year.

We are closing for the winter again this year, and attending two lavender festivals in the Colorado and Seattle area of the USA. Photos will be available in the next link.

Take care Charlotte & Keith Brown

### Distillation Totals

Variety	Weight kg.	Yield mls.
Avice Hill	557.5	10115
Fouvaux Storm	85.0	1270
Grosso	2,793.5	87405
Hops	292.0	931
Impress Purple	160.0	3210
Mixed	606.0	10220
Pacific Blue	3,566.5	70214
Rosemary	79.0	180
Super A	574.0	14960
Super C	433.0	8635
Thyme	852.0	2145
Violet Intrigue	950.0	9130

**Grand Total 10,948.5(Kilos) 218.42 (Litres)**

More photos from Charlotte and Keith's 2016 trip



## Jo Ewing Botanical Greeting Cards



L. angustifolia 'Avice Hill'



L. angustifolia 'Pacific Blue'



L. angustifolia 'Violet Intrigue'



Lavandular x intermedia 'Grosso'



Lavandular x intermedia 'Super'

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