THE NEW ZEALAND LAVENDER GROWERS ASSOCIATION

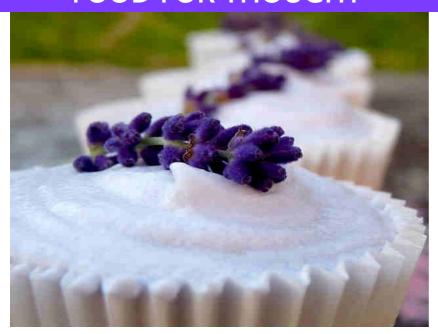


Quarterly newsletter for Association members

Issue 67

Winter 2017

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



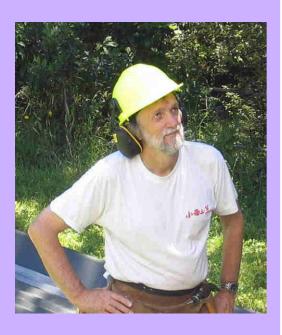
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Chairman's Chatter





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

Chairpersons Report-Winter 2017

The wet weather has continued from autumn and many of our farms, particularly in the north, have not fared well with more losses of Lavender. It has been pretty tough seeing many of your plants die and the thought of rebuilding the plant beds for the coming season. The Northern group had their usual 3 monthly meeting, this time at Mike's farm in Pirongia. These meeting are well attended and a shared lunch is enjoyed by all. As usual many lavender and non-lavender topics were discussed and a variety of solutions discussed.

Talga Conference-The Australian Lavender Growers Association

In June Margaret and I attended the Talga Conference held in Gatton, about 1 hour inland from Brisbane. Susi White and Blake Foster were also there so we had a good kiwi attendance. The conference had a number of guest speakers covering tourism, where telling your story added the most value, bio security covering diseases etc., starting a lavender farm, experiences from a new grower and the uses of culinary lavender in your cafe. I think the most inspiring talk was on culinary lavender and the setting up of a cafe on their farm in Tasmania. The professionalism of producing the finest food with lavender to a very high quality and the buy-in of all their staff to the experience was very inspiring.

The courage and commitment to this project was truly awe inspiring. On opening day they started with 3 staff but by the end of the season they were employing 16. On the second day of the conference we were treated with a bus tour of the Lockyer Valley, Australia's food bowl, with excellent commentary from an organic grower. Morning tea was at a plant nursery, definitely the biggest I have seen, with highly automated potting robots and acres of shade houses for germinating the plants. Lunch was at Gary Young's Lavender farm, Holmwood. Gary is Talga's current president. If we have been worrying about the amount of rain we have had, Gary has had to endure 3 major floods which each time has washed away the majority of his lavender plants resulting in having to re-establish his farm each time. After lunch we continued our bus tour of the Lockyer Valley, visiting Comvita's Olive tree farm. Here Comvita extract oil from the leaves of about 900 thousand Olive trees for use in their well-being products. Overall the Talga conference was very enjoyable with excellent hospitality from the Talga members. The next Talga conference will be in Tasmania and I would encourage our members to attend. You will be inspired.

Website

Not a lot has happened with the website over this last quarter. We still receive many website generated inquiries from the general public and from potential new growers. I would encourage all members to review their story in their profile page and email me updates including new photos. If you do not have a story in your profile page yet, then please make sometime to send me an article with photos. Telling your story is the best way to capture a reader's attention and helps to advertise your farm and sell your products and services.

AGM.

This year the AGM will be held in Wellington at the Brentwood Hotel, 2nd September starting 9am.

We need members new and old to volunteer for the Executive. Of particular urgency we need a volunteer to take on the secretary's roll with Charlotte retiring from this position at the AGM. If you are interested please do contact me for details.



Oil Awards.

Planning for this year's Oil awards judging is well underway with many entries received so far. With some of our judges planning to retire, Dr Noel Porter recently ran a training season for 6 new judges. This workshop ran very well with all 6 achieving the necessary standard to join the judging pool. If you are planning to enter oils please do not leave it to the last minute. To encourage entries a new pricing structure has been worked out with the executive subsiding the cost of the first entry. We hope you will take advantage of this..

Oil GCMS testing.

The University of Auckland have been contracted to carry out our lavender Oil testing. I would like to acknowledge Blake Foster for finding this resource. We have just processed our first batch of samples with another batch about to be analyzed. To help with the interpretation I have created a spreadsheet reporting form which shows each components typical maximum and minimum ranges for each cultivar type taken from 7 years of samples that Dr Noel Porter had previously run. Within these limits you will see where your sample fits. Alongside each component there is also a description of its "note" and its properties and usage. If time permits at the AGM I will give a small presentation of this work and reporting format. An oil testing submission form can be found in the members section of the website under oil testing. The first entry has been subsidized by your executive to help members take advantage of this service.

To all our new members, welcome, and please do make contact with existing growers for help and advice if needed. To all our members, our Library is a great resource of information and our librarian, Pauline has added a few more interesting new titles. Email library@lavender.org.nz to request.

I always welcome your contact and look forward to hearing from you for your inspiration and on ways your executive can better serve you. See you all at the AGM.

Cheers
Peter Jemmett
chairperson@lavender.org.nz

From the Editor

Hello everyone

Here we are in the depths of winter. It is highly likely that you are either very cold or very wet or both. Particularly if you are in the South island.

In the north (Auckland) we don't really experience serious cold, anything in single digits and we are whingeing.

I am fortunate to have a little wood burner and on a cold night can stoke it up. No relying on a heat pump. I can also cook on it if the power goes out. I would love to try some of the lavender recipes from the book featured in our Library section, but will save my efforts for the electric oven. I would like to make something that doesn't taste like soap.

In our new Technical Corner series, Dr Noel Porter discusses oil production and how to get the best out of it. This is very easy reading and is a gold mine of information. I pick up something every time I run my eye over the article. I look forward to more from this contributor.



If you haven't already done so, consider entering your oil for the oil awards. Entries

close August 1st. There is just enough time. Forms are on page 8-9 of the Link.

The Annual General Meeting and Oil Awards are coming up, this year in Wellington, giving members the chance to get together from all over the country.

I'll see you there. Keep warm and dry. Cheers Helen

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Joanna & Peter Clark Nor'West Lavender, Rangiora

Susan Twomey & Seamus Lyons Pitt Investments, Spring Creek

Paula Cosgrove Avondale, Auckland

Evan & Caitlin Cobham
Selah Valley Lavender Products, Paparimu

Ian Moore
The Soap factory

To advertise in

The Lavender Link

Rates for NZLGA Members:

Full page - \$44.00 Half page - \$27.00 1/4 page - \$17.50 1/8 page - \$ 13.00

Rates for Non-Members:

Full page - \$88.00 Half page - \$54.00 1/4 page - \$34.00 1/8 page - \$26.00

You will be invoiced once your ad appears. Please make sure you include your contact details, and email the ad to:

Helen Mason helen am@61@hotmail.com

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.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND BUSINESS

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of members of the New Zealand Lavender Growers' Association Inc to be held at

Brentwood Hotel, 16 Kemp Street, Kilbirnie, Wellington

on

Saturday 2nd September 2017 commencing 9am.

AGM BUSINESS

Attendees

Apologies and Proxy votes

Minutes of previous Annual General meeting held on Saturday 10th Sept 2016

Annual Report (to adopt the Annual Report)

Financial Statements (to adopt the financial statements for the year ending 30^{th} June 2017)

Appointment of Auditor (to appoint a reviewer)

Subscriptions

Election of Officers/ Executive Committee

Break for Morning Tea 10.30a.m.

General Business (all general business to be submitted by remit)

Remits

Conference discussion.

Open discussion on what members would like to see from the association.

Conclusion of AGM

This notice of Annual General Meeting and the Business set out above has been drawn up in accordance with the Rules of the Association as they stand as at the date of this Notice.

Break for Lunch approx. 12:30pm

Oil Competition awards

A full Agenda and Explanatory Notes will be issued nearer to the date of the meeting.

CALL FOR REMITS

Any items for General business (remits) can be lodged in writing (or by email) to the AGM Secretary,

Pauline at Email: <u>library@lavender.org.nz</u> **Remits must be lodged by 31st July**Post: 66 Duff Rd, RD2, Waiuku 2682

Kind Regards Peter Jemmett NZLGA Chairperson

The Technical Corner-Dr Noel Porter

As a result of conversations with various people in recent weeks, I thought that it might be useful to revisit some of the technical aspects of lavender oil production since there seem to have been a significant turnover of association members. Although all the technical conference papers and reports I have written over the years have been lodged with the Association library, some of them have probably been forgotten. Your library holds the best collection of technical research information of any lavender producers' group in the world, most of it specifically done with the needs of the Association and its members in mind. I hope these refresher articles will help update the technical side of your oil production and help optimise your oil quality and profitability. Please consult the library holdings to get the full detail available on the topic. If you have specific topics you would like addressed, either as summary articles like the one following, or as shorter questions, let me know and I will include them in future Technical Corners.

Storage of oils.

Since the most recent enquiry was about oil storage, I thought I would start by summarising some of the major factors and easy procedures to prepare your oils and manage them during storage. Some of you may be producing oils other than lavender. The following comments apply equally to the vast range of essential oils. There does not appear to be a lot of information in the literature regarding oil storage but there are some simple, cheap precautions and processes that you can use to avoid degradation of your oil and to maintain, and hopefully improve, the aromatic quality.

All essential oils are very complex mixtures of reactive chemical compounds. The most important thing to realise about your oil is that it is continually reacting and changing. The art of storage is to actively manage those changes to your advantage. Most lavender oils will benefit from a period of storage by allowing time to reduce any off-notes and the sharpness that often exist immediately after distillation, to optimise the aromatic balance of the oil and to emphasise the good aromatic characters that you want to use to promote your products of the buyer. In the oil competitions, we have quite frequently seen oils achieve only average scores at 6 months, but improve during storage to win awards the following year. It is definitely worth considering storage for a year or more as a routine part of your production planning. While it is possible to store good oil for several years, it is not usually possible to make good oil out of bad just by storage. It is certainly possible to reduce some of the off-notes that may appear in your fresh oils. For example, one of the common off-notes in Grosso and Pacific Blue has a burnt, old varnish aroma, but this consistently reduces during storage. Other off-notes such as musty, cooked, fungal or oxidised notes often remain more permanent faults.

The main influences during storage

There are five main influences on oils during storage. I'll go through these in order of importance with reasons why they are important and the simple measures you should take to manage them to your advantage.

1. Oil containers

First is the material of the containers you use for your oil. These comments also refer to any other funnels, measuring equipment, or dispensing equipment come into contact with your oil. There must be no plastic, rubber or polymer materials – containers, caps, seals or liners – in contact with the oil at any stage after the oil comes out of the condenser. There are no exceptions to this rule other than verifiably pure Teflon. The best storage container is dark glass, such as the 2.5L chemical winchesters. Stainless steel containers are also good – check out the kitchenware second hand dealers - but may be too expensive. Normal aluminium containers are unsuitable because the oxide layer on the surface retains taints and cannot be cleaned satisfactorily. There are some aluminium containers available made by Tournaire that are specially finished inside and suitable for short-term storage or transport of your oils. These are available from an Auckland company called Innovaction.



The Technical Corner

2. Water

Water will always be present in your oil immediately after distillation, either as visible droplets or as invisible micro-droplets. It causes the hydrolysis of several important compounds, especially esters like linalyl acetate. The ester content is critically important to both the aromatic quality and the chemical specification of oils. Hydrolysis leads to a noticeable reduction in ester content and the quality of your oil and may also lead to off notes. Immediately after distillation, you must separate the oil from the water as completely as possible with a glass separating funnel so that you can see whether there is bulk water left in your oil. To remove the last water droplets, put the oil in the freezer overnight, ensuring there is some headspace in the container to allow for expansion. After 24 hours, check that any water droplets have frozen solid and stuck to the glass sides of your container. Pour off the oil quickly leaving the water stuck to the glass. Your oil should now be free of visible water droplets. If you plan to store your oil for more than a month, you should remove the micro-droplets and any water dissolved in the oil as soon as possible by adding anhydrous sodium sulphate. This is added as a dry, granular powder to your oil in a glass container, at the rate of one heaped tablespoon per litre of oil. Leave it cool and dark for two days, then invert the container. If all the granules have coalesced into a single mass, pour off the oil into another dry container. Repeat the process until the dry powder stays as discrete granules rather than a coalesced mass. At this stage, your oil will be thoroughly dried and suitable for storage for as long as you need.

If you have an organic rating for your oils, then the use of sodium sulphate may be prohibited under your certification scheme. In this case, you should pass your oil through filter papers. These must be food grade or better and must be pure cellulose, with no other materials such as resins, polymers, etc incorporated into the paper. The cellulose will absorb any micro-droplets that may be in the oil and allow the oil to pass through sufficiently dry for storage. As the paper becomes wet with absorbed water, it will darken in colour, making it obvious when a new paper is required.

I have only been able to find suitable pleated filter papers at a reasonable cost from the coffee machine marketers on the Internet where there are quite large papers available at very cheap rates. The filtration rate will be slow but there are some large papers available which should give reasonable flow rates. As yet, I have been unable to find a more rapid, cheap alternative for drying oil under the organic regulations. Make sure that you use a stainless steel filter funnel to support the paper when you are filtering your oils.

3. Temperature

All chemical reactions that are occurring in your oils will continue at normal ambient temperatures and will increase as the temperature increases. For the first 2-3 months, store your oils in cool ambient temperatures - <8°C. Once your oil has reached an acceptable quality and aromatic balance, it should be put into cool storage – either a very cool room or a normal refrigerator - <4°C. If you want to store reference samples of your oils over the years, then they should go into a deep freeze. The consequences of higher temperatures working on your oils is the increased production of off-notes, the oxidation of your oils and/or the formation of peroxides. All of these reactions are serious and significant risks to your aromatic quality, but can be avoided so easily.

4. Exposure to oxygen

The other major factor is the exposure of your oil to air – i.e. oxygen. Contact of your oils with oxygen leads to reactions which produce various characteristic aromatic off-notes. These reactions are increased greatly by the presence of light and heat – hence the need to use both lightproof storage containers and cool storage. Your storage containers must be well-sealed against the entry of air, so that apart from your occasional evaluation of aromatic quality, air is prevented from entering and adding oxygen to the headspace. The volume of the containers should be as large as possible but just big enough for each oil batch, so that there is the absolute minimum headspace volume – and therefore oxygen - for the greatest volume of oil.

Particularly important in lavender oils is the production of peroxides from linalool which cause allergenic skin reactions. There are regulations in the EU markets that are very specific about peroxide levels. European buyers are very sensitive about the presence of peroxides and may require specific analyses for their levels. If you want to be fully professional — and it is good quotable value for your promotional story to show that you are aware of the peroxide problem — you can get rid of any oxygen in the headspace by flushing it out with nitrogen gas which is available at reasonable cost in small cylinders. If you are sending oils to Europe, you could consider flushing the headspace of your shipping containers out with nitrogen before shipping to reduce the off notes that are indicative of peroxides to trained noses.

The Technical Corner

5. Managing your storage

These four factors above are the main determinants of oil quality and big improvements in quality are possible from these simple management procedures. This increased quality will improve your price, sales, promotional literature and credibility in the market place. Why would you not do it?

It is critically important to realise that the only practical way of monitoring your changing oil aroma/quality is by nose. This should be done monthly for the first six months. Only by regular re-evaluation and recording will you be able to identify and keep track of the changes that are going on in your oil. You should keep records on the aromatic notes and balance of the oil and particularly of any off-notes or aromatic imbalances that you are trying to reduce. I have attached a suggestion for a simple record sheet that you should use for each oil at each evaluation so that you can score and record the changes in your oils as you go. Let me know if there is anything you need to help with the evaluation process – e.g. another oil aroma evaluation workshop. I hope that this helps you understand the factors that can affect your oil quality and that you will use these simple processes to get the best out of your oil. If you have any questions or need further clarification please contact me.

Dr Noel G Porter 33a Merrin Street Christchurch 8042 03 3584393; 021 0279 0245

| | | OIL ÉVALUATION RÉCORD | | | | |
|------------------------|---------|--|---|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | |
| Cultivar | | Batch ID | Harvest Year | | | |
| Storage Histor | у | | | | | |
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| Off-notes | | Descript | ion. | | | |
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| Date | Initial | | | | | |
| Score O to -10 | | | | | | |
| Date | | | | | | |
| Score 0 to -10 | | | | | | |
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| Date | Initial | | | | | |
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| Scare Ota -10 | | | | | | |
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| Date | Initial | | | | | |
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| Date Score -5 to +5 | | + + + | | | | |
| 3CU18 -3 (U +5) | | | | | | |

NZ LAVENDER GROWERS ASSOCIATION SUPREME OIL AWARDS <u>ENTRY FORM: 2017</u>

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

| <u>& return this form with your entry!</u> | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|--|--|--|
| Entrants Name: | | | | | | | |
| Trading Name: | | | | | | | |
| Address: | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Phone/Fax: | | | | | | | |
| Email: | | | | | | | |
| Categories Entered: (please tick the relevant years) | | | | | | | |
| Angustifolia: | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | | | | |
| 1. Pacific Blue | | | | \$ | | | |
| 2. Avice Hill | | | | \$ | | | |
| 3. Violet Intrigue | | | | \$ | | | |
| 4. Other | | | | \$ | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Lavandin: | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | | | | |
| 1. Grosso | | | | \$ | | | |
| 2. Super | | | | \$ | | | |
| 3. Impress Purple | | | | \$ | | | |
| 4. Other | | | | \$ | | | |
| | | | | · | | | |
| *Blends: | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | | | | |
| 1. | | | | \$ | | | |
| 2. | | | | \$ | | | |
| 3. | | | | \$ | | | |
| 4. | | | | \$ | | | |
| | - | | TOTAL: | \$ | | | |
| *Blends may be mixto | ures of Lav | vandins &/o | or Angustifol | ias, 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: 1st 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 $5^h 6^{th}$ 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 or phone 036895510 or contact, Keith Brown, email keithbrown@clear.net.nz or Text 02102779358

Northern Regional Meeting-10 June 2017

Held at the home of Mike and Marion Alspach, Pirongia.

Apologies: Tony Anderson and Helen Mason, Tricia Henderson

<u>Present:</u> Sammie Wang and sister, Peter and Margaret Jemmett, Bindy Gummer, Mike and Marion Alspach, Robert and Pauline Livesey, Barbara-Lee Cook

New Members: Evan and Caitlin Cobham (Paparimu), Lenore (Gordonton)

Mike has visited the new owners of Alphra Lavender, Bernie and Julia. They have not yet joined The Association but intend to do so. <u>Areas of Discussion:</u> Sammie and Ben are in process of having a still constructed.

Mounders – What to use to mound up rows prior to planting lavender? Asparagus, melon, potato mounders all do the job.

Rubbings – how to kill moth grubs? Put in the freezer for about 3 weeks.

Anti-fungal spray? – Trichopel suggested.

Discussion re chemical v organic weed killers. No conclusion as everyone has different opinion on what to use. Sammie offered to forward details of a gentle weed killer used to spray blueberries.

<u>Update from Executive:</u> Mike is currently acting as treasurer for NZLGA

At the last Executive meeting it was recommended that the membership subscription level stay the same. There is a desire to add value to what members receive in return for paying subs.

GC (Gas Chromatography) Analysis of oils to be discounted to \$12 for first oil tested. Subsequent oils at full price. Similarly, first oil entry to Oil Awards to be discounted to \$10. Subsequent entries at full price. Mike encouraged or silver award is a great boost to business.

<u>TALGA Conference:</u> Peter and Margaret had recently attended The Australian Lavender Growers Conference. They provided the meeting with feedback.

Apparently the Australian process of distillation takes longer than here in New Zealand. The next TALGA Conference is to be held in Tasmania 2019.

<u>AGM:</u> To be held at The Brentwood Hotel, Wellington, on Saturday 2nd September 2017. Executive are looking for a new secretary and additional executive members. Remits to be submitted to AGM secretary, Pauline Livesey, by end July. Peter will be looking for new ideas from members on how to provide better value for subs. Paid. Reminder that all members have a profile page on the website but not all making full use of this facility.

Bindy suggested that an information sheet on the website regarding care for your lavender plants (different cultivars) would be helpful for the general public. Pauline and Bindy to communicate and develop sample for the next meeting. This could also go on the NZLGA facebook page.

<u>Date of next meeting:</u> 9th September 2017 at Lavender Hill, 11A Beacon Rd Coatesville.

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'

Set of 5 greeting cards with envelopes

To order contact Russell Rofe Phone: 03 689 5510 or email hook\$12.00 per set of 5 RRP \$4.00 each

NZLGA Library News

Library Report

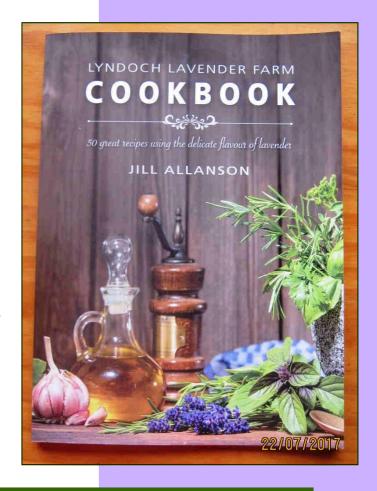
We have a new book in the Library - #B078

This is a beautifully presented cookbook from Lyndoch

Lavender farm. Set amongst the undulating vineyards of the Barossa ranges, Lyndoch Lavender Farm and Café, is a multi-award winning tourist attraction which has been entertaining visitors for 25 years. These recipes are real winners.

They are a selection of easy to make dishes suitable for any occasion from picnics to family meals or dining with friends.

All of the recipes can be made with or without the lavender but why leave out such a wonderful flavour?





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