

# Lavender

## Harvesting

Plants start flowering earlier in warmer and low altitude areas and later at higher slopes. Flowers are cut off with stem lengths not greater than 12 cm because of absence of oil in the stems and leaves. In the Kashmir Valley, the crop is ready for harvesting in August and September.

Production of high quality lavender oil depends on a number of factors such as the degree of blossoming, picking during suitable hours of the day, atmospheric conditions, method of harvesting, storage, flower transportation, etc. Harvesting should begin at 50 % blossoming and continued till the blooming is finished. Harvesting should be done on dry, warm and sunny days. Very cold weather prevents development of the esters and rain is fatal for harvesting. It is important to cut the flower axis completely at a uniform height because the flowers remaining on the shrub would affect flowering in the next year. The flower is cut with well-sharpened sickles.

### Yield

The oil quality and yield depends upon several factors, particularly soil and climatic conditions under which the plant is cultivated, the plant material used and the process of distillation. Studies carried out by CIMAP indicated that oil content range was from 1.2% to 1.5% while the yield was 15 kg per ha is obtained.

### Uses

The lavender species can be exploited in a number of ways. As a medicinal plant, its dried inflorescence (*Lavandulae flos*) has traditionally been considered to be an antispasmodic, a carminative, a diuretic, a stimulant, and a tonic. It has been used as a folk remedy against colic and headaches. Lavender has also been an important ingredient in herb baths for a long time.

The essential oil of lavender (*Aetheroleum lavandulae*) has antiseptic, carminative, and spasmolytic activity. The flowers are considered to be an insect repellent.

Lavender oil is frequently used in cologne toilet waters, lotions and a wide range of high-quality perfumes, often after extensive bending or 'stretching'. Spike lavender oil scents cheap soaps, polishes, detergents and liquid cleaners, although the more delicate. French oil is also used in room sprays, deodorants, disinfectants and insecticides. The major consumer of lavandin oil is the soap industry but the oil also has much application in men's colognes and numerous inexpensive perfumes, detergents, cleaning and washing-up liquids, polishes, talcum powders and hair preparations.

## Oil Contents

Terpeinen-4-ol	2.3%
Alpha-pinene	0.2%
Cumene	1.02%
Camphene	0.42%
Beta-pinene	1.29%
myrcene	0.47%
Limonene	11.0%
1,8-cineole	1.82%
p-cymene	0.27%
Limonene oxide	0.57%
Citronellol acetate	0.45%
Lavendulyl acetate	0.13%
Farnesene	0.07%