

# The 'Physician' of Purple



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**L**AVENDER'S SWEET AND herbal fragrance is said to alleviate symptoms of anxiety, fatigue, stress and tension, making it ideal for addressing, well, you know — life. Turns out, lavender also can preserve farmland and generate a thriving agritourism community grounded in environmentally responsible and sustainable farming practices.

In 1995, fallow dairy pastures throughout the Sequim-Dungeness Valley were transitioning to accommodate a growing population and commercial development. A small group of concerned citizens decided to come up with a practical and productive solution that would help preserve the region's agricultural tradition and serve the community economically. Their search for a crop that would adapt to local growing conditions — minimum water/maximum sun — led them to lavender.

Today, this pocket of purple paradise on the North Olympic Peninsula is home to the Sequim Lavender Festival ([lavenderfestival.com](http://lavenderfestival.com)) and has grown into the Lavender Capital of North America. What began as eight lavender farms, planted between 1995 and



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1998, has grown to include more than 30 additional ones.

Paul Jendrucko and his wife, Mary, own the Sequim Lavender Company. Jendrucko calls himself Dr. Lavender, even though, as the festival's website disclaims, "Dr. Lavender is not a medical practitioner; he is just a guy who likes lavender." While there are more than 45 species of lavender, Dr. Lavender recommends the following three species for

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**The Sequim Lavender Festival** has been canceled again this year, but several regional farms are open to guests, with safety protocols in place.

**Sequim's Dr. Lavender prescribes the top 3 species to grow around Seattle — along with lots of deep breaths**

Clubs also help bolster the psychological discipline that can be helpful in market downturns — or when things are not as good as they seem. During the market downturn of 2008, “We hardly sold anything,” Glein says. On the other hand, “People do fall in love with their stocks, and they’re not good at seeing when there’s issues.” 📧

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**The Women of Woodinville** visit the stock exchange neighborhood on a trip to New York to celebrate the 20th anniversary of their club.

Left to right, Carol Olson, Jean Peterson, Kim Hickman, Carol Stonich, Maureen Blum, Maureen Volz, Joyce McNeil and Suzanne Pettersson.



COURTESY MAUREEN BLUM

our growing region:

- Spanish lavender (*Lavandula stoechas*) is the earliest-blooming lavender, with characteristic “bunny ear”-topped flowers appearing in spring and continuing throughout the summer. Blooms might be lavender, pink, dark blue, white or yellow, a greater diversity of flower colors than any other lavender. The plant’s form is bushy and informal, with a sprawling habit that makes it a good groundcover.

- English lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) produces copious sweetly scented blossoms beginning in late spring and early summer. The silver-green plants have a dense, compact habit, growing 2 to 3 feet tall and as wide. Different varieties of English lavender produce blooms in shades of light to deep purple, white and pink.

- *Lavandula x intermedia* is a hybrid cross that produces large flower heads on long, elegant stems. The plants, which can grow quite big, to 3 or more feet, have a stately presence in the landscape and might even be used as an evergreen hedge. Blossoms are blue, purple or white; both flowers and foliage contain camphor, an aroma that distinguishes them from sweeter English varieties.

In the garden, provide lavender with well-drained soil and plenty of sun. Good air circulation helps prevent rot and fungal disease and will carry the plants’ enticing fragrance on prevailing breezes. Keep newly installed lavender watered during its first growing season, but established plants won’t need additional water or fertilizing. Lavender plants are pest-free and deer-resistant.

Pruning will determine whether your plants remain tidy and mounded or form a sprawling woody framework. The latter, sometimes called “lodging,” is a natural lavender growth habit that the plant will resort to if left unpruned. Dr. Lavender recommends what he calls “the Halloween haircut.” In late fall, after growth has stopped, trim plants into a tidy mound, remov-

ing any dried bloom spikes and the top couple of inches of green growth. Do not cut into older wood. If you miss the pruning window in late fall, you can follow the same procedure in early spring, but note that well-pruned plants are more resilient to winter snows.

Due to an abundance of caution, the Sequim Lavender Festival has been canceled again this year. However, the bloom must go on, and several regional farms are open to guests, with safety protocols in place. Visit the festival website for visitor information and open hours. 📧

*Lorene Edwards Forkner is the author of “The Beginner’s Guide to Growing Great Vegetables,” Timber Press, 2021. Follow along at [ahandmadegarden.com](http://ahandmadegarden.com).*



Several Sequim lavender farms offer a pick-your-own harvest option.