

November
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CLAIRMONT FARMS



Second Issue

Lavender

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WELCOME

Thanks again for signing up for our mailing list. We apologize for falling behind in producing this newsletter. We have been pretty busy this season putting some improvements into the farm (see below) and our process. We would like to hear from you about things you would like us to include in the next issue of this newsletter.

NEW STORE BUILDING

As most of you know, we have operated out of a tent/gazebo arrangement for all our years. While "homey" this has had real limitations with wind, dust, rain and all the other elements. We finally have built a 12 x 20 structure to house our store. It took us almost three months to get this finished, because we were framing, doing drywall and painting during harvest time. Harvesting had to come first. It came from Home Depot, and we are proud that like most of our products we make we "did it here" And the best part is that we can have things like art work and gifts that would not have worked well outside.

If you have a chance, stop in and see it. It's as cozy inside as it looks on the outside. We will post some pictures on our website at <http://www.clairmontfarms.com>

250 LITER STILL

This is a picture of our large still. Many of you may remember that we had a smaller still on a table that was often running. Our new still was hand made in Portugal to order. It is 250 liters. If you have bought oil from us recently, it was made in this still.

Here is a description of the process. Underneath the whole arrangement is a small pit with a propane burner in it. Sitting on top is the "boiler/vaporizer" on the left. The rounded vessel at the bottom has only water. The central cylinder has lavender buds. Buds are the part of the plant that has the oil. Leaves and stems (and flowers in the summer) don't yield any appreciable amount of oil. As the water boils, the steam comes up through the lavender. The lavender oil boils at a



temperature lower than water, so the steam, which is at 212 degrees, vaporizes the oil. Oil vapor and steam then pass into the "condenser" on the right.

The condenser is just a copper coil that the steam and oil vapor go into that is surrounded by water. As the vapors cool, they become oil and water. Just like salad dressing the oil will float on top of the water.

At the output of the condenser is the separator. Running the still with about 50 pounds of buds will yield about 1/3 gallon of pure essential lavender oil.

Sometime soon we will post a video on YouTube of the distiller in operation. Stills seem to have a special place in American Culture. Every day people ask questions like "So... what do you really do with that thing after hours?" Our answer, which is true is that "Lavender oil is actually very valuable, and alcohol is really cheap. If we wanted any, we would just go and buy it." Everyone understands this. It's also the case that the copper in the still would become contaminated with other substances that would detract from the quality of our oils.

If you are interested in the properties of the oil, take a look on our site on the page "Lavender Info" and the document "uses of lavender".



Holiday Gift Ideas

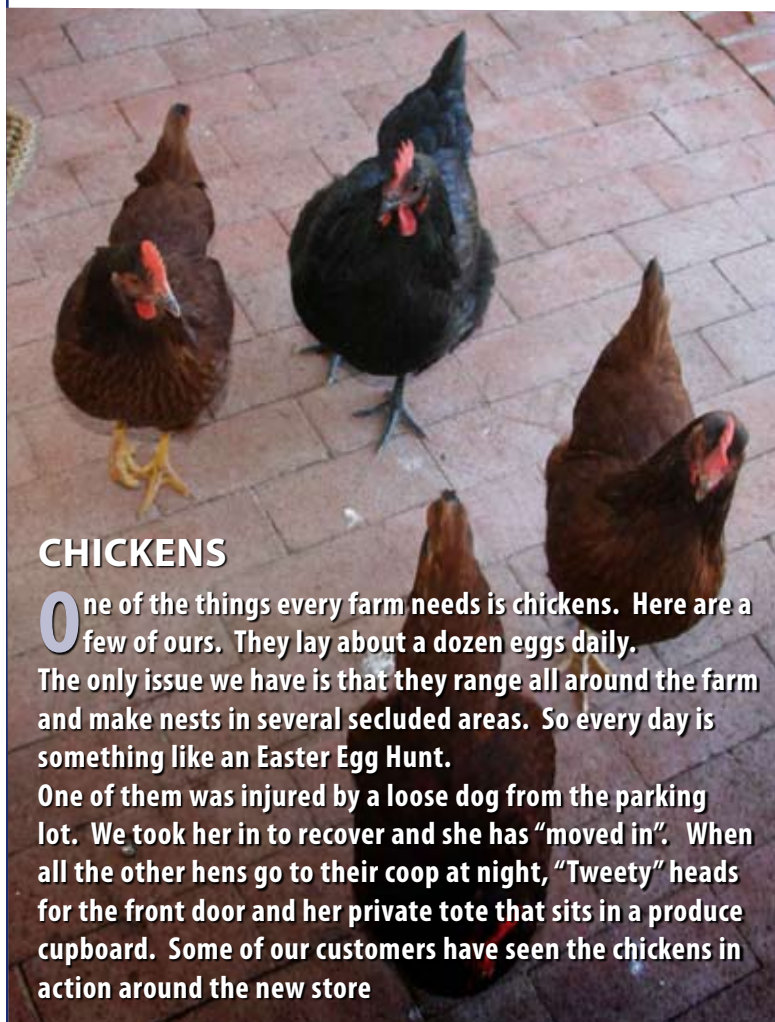
We have our shopping cart on the "Our Products" page of our website. You can order off of it or you can just call us on the phone. One of the things that more people seem to be doing for the holidays is "drop shipping" gifts. They can place an order and we send the gifts to the recipient, and the order paperwork to the person placing the order. We ship most orders USPS Priority Mail the same day we get them, so they take only a couple of days to get there.

We have also tried various "Gift Basket" ideas over the years. "Baskets" didn't seem to work so well. But what we have now is working. It's a clear gift bag trimmed in lavender. There are two sizes. 4" x 4" x 7.5" and 3" x 3" x 5". What we will do for the holidays is to give you the gift bag with the bow on it and you just buy the gifts you want and we will put them in. Just give us a call or if you order online, just put in the special notes section that you want us to "gift bag" your order.

A NUMBER OF YOU HAVE ASKED ABOUT NEW THINGS THAT WE OFFER. HERE ARE A FEW FROM THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS

- Lotion Bar A .5 oz twist up made of beeswax, coconut oil, olive oil and lavender oil. It's for places like cuticles, feet, elbows and the like that lotion or body butter just isn't thick enough for \$7.
- Lavender Tea In a 4 oz jam jar we have Earl Grey or Organic Green Tea mixed with our culinary lavender.
- Lip Balm A lipstick sized twist up of lavender, beeswax, carnauba wax and olive oil. Soothing for chapped lips

Happy Thanksgiving from
Meryl and Glenn



CHICKENS

One of the things every farm needs is chickens. Here are a few of ours. They lay about a dozen eggs daily. The only issue we have is that they range all around the farm and make nests in several secluded areas. So every day is something like an Easter Egg Hunt. One of them was injured by a loose dog from the parking lot. We took her in to recover and she has "moved in". When all the other hens go to their coop at night, "Tweety" heads for the front door and her private tote that sits in a produce cupboard. Some of our customers have seen the chickens in action around the new store