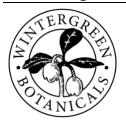
Growing & Using Peaceful Herbs



Wintergreen Botanicals, LLC

Maria Noël Groves, Clinical Herbalist Allenstown, NH (Near Bear Brook State Park) 603-340-5161, office@wintergreenbotanicals.com www.WintergreenBotanicals.com

GROWING PEACE

Also see my book Grow Your Own Herbal Remedies for more on most of these herbs.

Perennials	Annuals	
Lemon Balm	Some may self-seed	Tender Perennial
Motherwort	Milky Oats	"Annuals" from Hot
Skullcap (finicky, likes wet)	California Poppy	Climates
Lavender (finicky, likes dry)	Chamomile, German	You can try bringing them
Valerian (roots)		indoors in winter or grow
Blue Vervain	Trees, Shrubs, Vines	them in a greenhouse if your
Catnip	3-10 years until harvest	climate is cold.
Wood Betony	Linden	Holy Basil (may self-seed)
Korean Licorice Mint (KLM)	Mimosa	Gotu Kola
Anise Hyssop	Roses (wild/heirloom)	Ashwagandha
St. John's wort	Schizandra	Passionflower
	Magnolia	

Calm-Energy Adaptogens

Adaptogens help the body adapt to stress, improve energy

- Holy Basil (Ocimum tenuiflorum syn O. sanctum), also called Tulsi and Sacred Basil, comes in several varieties and one other species (O. gratissimum) that are subtly different yet relatively interchangeable. Grow It: I prefer the Kapoor (often unnamed) for productivity in a temperate climate – though not as potent as other varieties, it is still excellent, and most commercial dry bulk holy basil is very poor quality unless direct from a U.S. organic farm (iFarm, Zack Woods). Grow it like culinary basil - rich soil, decent moisture, full sun, loves heat, tolerates containers. Cut back and use the flowers and leaves throughout the season. (Kapoor/Temperate flowers profusely, may be an O. africanum variety.) Happy plants reach 1-3 feet tall. **Properties:** Imparts Zen-like calm-energy. Calming adaptogen, nootropic for cognition and calm-alert focus (does make some people feel high, though). Balances cortisol, lowers/balances blood sugar, reduces cravings (especially sugar and stress-induced). Anti-anxiety, mood-boosting, nervine, anti-inflammatory, digestion-enhancing. Dispersive, moving, airy, spirit energy. A great "Protector:" stress, inflammation, ulcers, radiation, cold/flu/infections. Planted in pots in temples in India; strongly aromatic with sweet, spicy notes of mint, clove, basil, and bubble gum. How to Use It: Flowers/leaves/aerial parts. Great as a fresh or dry tea (especially with roses, lemon balm) but really useful in any way shape or form. Blends well with green tea. Great in infused water or seltzer, honey, hydrosol, oxymel, glycerite. Cautions: Generally well tolerated but makes some people feel high/spacey (and in rare cases, anxious). Hypoglycemic unsweetened on an empty stomach. May inhibit fertility. May reduce thyroid function. Kid-friendly.
- <u>Gotu Kola</u> (*Centella asiatica*), also called Brahmi (FYI, *Bacopa monnieri* is more commonly called this and has similar nootropic-nervine properties and growing conditions but is quite different overall). **Grow It**: Gotu kola's a creeping vine-like plant that resembles ground ivy and sends out

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shoots like strawberries (which'll hang down from a pot and root where it meets soil). Tender perennial that loves warm, ultra-moist, extremely rich soil (think: sewage sludge, it's favored growing environment in India) in dappled/partial/indirect sun. Does well in pots with damp feet. Overwinters well with plenty of watering and the right spot. Harvest whenever it's happy. Botanically in between parsley and ginseng families. Properties: Sloooow acting, building tonic with higher doses producing more profound results. Exemplary brain tonic, neuroprotector, neuroregenerative, cognition/memory/focus enhancement, calm-energy adaptogen. Excellent in almost any brain/cognitive issue including ADHD, dementia support, traumatic brain injury, diseases that affect the nervous system like Lyme. Blends well with other more fast-acting nootropics. Also improves wound healing, circulation, collagen synthesis, less fragile blood vessels on contact and systemically: wounds, pre and post surgery, poor connective tissue, varicose veins, vascular insufficiency, bruising, hemorrhoids, ulcers, gut healing/leaky gut, gum health, skin conditions, scars. How to Use It: Trim back aerial parts to node or harvest whole plant. More profound in very high doses (1 oz dry herb tea/powder per day), subtle in typical herb doses. Eat it fresh or cooked as a leafy green (flavor reminiscent of seaweed, celery, watercress, parsley, and/or dryer sheets/dirt – may be picking up soil flavor). Probably strongest as super-infused tea, powder in food, plant in food (KP Khalsa recommends blending with spinach to make saag) but also serviceable as regular tea infusion, tincture, capsule. Hot climates/temperatures (Hawaii) might better develop the constituents responsible for adaptogenic properties but still worth considering in the northern garden because... Cautions: Usually very safe and food-like, even in high doses. Market quality often poor and sometimes contaminated with fecal bacteria. Might inhibit fertility mildly. Might have blood-thinning properties (but it strengthens blood vessels). Kid-friendly.

- Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera) Grow It: Nightshade family tender perennial from India, grow like tomato = hot, sunny spot with good drainage. Doesn't like competition from nearby plants. Tolerates drier soil. Happy plants reach 3-4 feet tall. Root harvests can be small in north, relating to plant size and soil. **Properties**: Believed to impart the strength of a stallion if taken regularly. Calm yet deep energy, excellent in fatigue. Nervine for anxiety, PTSD, depression. Increases thyroid function, modulates immune function both in illness and in autoimmune disease. Gently decreases inflammation (great with holy basil, turmeric, others), libido, sexual function in men and women. cognition, much more. How to Use It: Harvest roots in fall of first year (in most climates) or second year (preferred, in hot zones 8+), ideally when the leaves yellow a bit and the husked berries turn red. and dry before further processing (on its own, it's strong!). I dry it first (stinks!) – you'll retain more medicine if you dry in cooler temperatures versus with heat. Some use it fresh. Some research on standardized leaves, some herbalists are using leaves, but they're not quite the same as roots. Standard herb doses or higher (such as 1 tsp root powder per dose). Great in tea, tincture, broth, nut butter balls, infused in hot milk. Chai flavors and chocolate blend well Cautions: Generally very well tolerated and enjoyed by most. Caution with people sensitive to nightshade family plants (tomatoes, potatoes, peppers) – may also react – and in hyperthyroid disease, and alongside thyroid medications - may overstimulate thryoid. Sometimes overstimulates or oversedates, but it's usually just right.
- <u>Schizandra</u> (*Schisandra chinensis*), a vigorous bittersweet-like vine in need of *strong* support arbor, will grow in cold climates. Need male and female plants. May take several years til you can harvest the berries. Berries: Five Flavor punch: sweet, sour, salty, pungent, bitter. Liver tonic, immune. Calmenergy adaptogen. Clear, calm, focused. Many uses!

Trophorestorative Nervines

Nervines calm and nourish nervous-adrenal system without over-sedating. (Some people use the term "nervine" to refer to anything that affects the nerves in any way. I use it specifically for those with a "trophorestorative" action — nourishing, supporting, balancing, healing.) Consider these herbs for anxiety, stress, mild mood support, general sleep support without being over-sedating. Excellent in formula.

- **Lemon Balm** (Melissa officinalis) **Grow It:** Easy to grow in the herb garden. Prefers rich, moist, well-drained soil in partial sun but will tolerate a range of conditions and can get invasive, spreading via root runners and sometimes by seed. Properties: Aromatic, mildly bitter, mildly astringent. Calming and uplifting nervine, gladdens the heart, improves focus/mental function and eases anxiety quickly and as a long-term tonic. Nootropic in ADHD, dementia, memory, focus. Mild digestive bitter/carminative/relaxer, great for nervous indigestion and dyspepsia. Aids sleep but doesn't over sedate. Calms agitation, frustration, anger, irritation. Topical for early onset herpes outbreaks (also take internally). Gentle yet exceptional. *Mildly* subdues hyperthyroid (usually not enough). Eases heart palpitations, stress. **How to Use It:** Harvest leaves/aerial parts when happy. Fresh = strongest, especially tincture but also good as glycerite, syrup, oxymel, vinegar. Still serviceable (milder) freshly dried in tea or capsule. Loses potency quickly once dried but can still be used. Blends very well with other herbs (adaptogens, nootropics, nervines, digestive herbs). Best dried in single layer in good airflow without much heat to preserve aromatics and prevent blackening. Nice fresh in infusions, water, seltzer, especially with more flavorful herbs like mint, holy basil, lemongrass. Cautions: Usually very well tolerated and kid-safe. Tannins in strong-brewed tea might upset some sensitive bellies (use a lighter steep, add a little honey). Commercial quality's often poor. Grow your own or buy direct from farm (iFarm, Zack Woods). Usually fine in hypothyroid.
- Motherwort (Leonurus cardiaca) Grow It: It prefers to choose its spot, and then can self-sow weedily. Prefers good soil, good drainage, moderate moisture, not too much competition, in part sun.

 Properties: Amazing for conditions that involve the interplay of nervous and heart health. Quick relief for panic attacks that feel like heart attacks. For stress-induced cardiac issues like hypertension, palpitations, tightness, maybe even (mild) atrial fibrillation. Gladstar says "For mothers and those who need a little mothering." Excellent for those who feel overworked and underappreciated, who don't have good boundaries and self care, to help mellow out mood roller coasters, agitation, emotional rampages so we can refocus on calm and self-care, bring us back to center. Great in mood issues, especially those with stress or reproductive hormone origins including PMS and perimenopausal mood swings. Mild phytoestrogen. Mildly eases hyperthyroid stress (often not strong enough solo). Fierce tough love. Bitter, grounding. How to Use It: Best fresh, so often as a fresh plant tincture. Also good as vinegar or oxymel. Feel free to play with other methods, but it's too bitter for tea. Preferred in flower (aerial parts) but serviceable when in happy leafy growth; goes by quickly once it flowers. Spiky calyx sharp/splinters. Cautions: Careful with heart meds. Usually fine in hypothyroid. Because it's bitter, it may cause nausea in high doses on an empty stomach.
- <u>Lavender</u> (*Lavandula angustifolia*) ask locals which variety grows best (in NH, hidcote, munstead). Prefers drier, sandier soil without too much competition, near rocks (friends with thyme, horehound). Use flower buds for aromatic hydrosol, tincture, tea, or buy an essential oil. Internal use = potent. Calming, pain-relieving, estrogenic. Sleep. Low dose is usually plenty strong enough.
- <u>Blue Vervain</u> (*Verbena hastata*) water-loving wildflower, use aerial parts/tops in flower. MANY uses, relaxes muscle spasms, headaches, neck tension/pain, control freaks, also immune/flu aid, modulates blood sugar (digestive bitter), gentle liver/detox, grounds mood, and aids the "metabolically brittle" (think: hangry and swooning emotional fits as those seen in *Streetcar Named Desire*). Excellent in vata folks, tense, wind. Good fresh or freshly dried. So bitter, often best as a tincture but vinegar/oxymel would work well, too. Just a few drops often works, but higher doses are safe as long as it's not too nauseating (from the bitter flavor).
- <u>Milky Oats</u> (*Avena sativa*), a popular cover crop. Fresh seeds pop a milky latex when squeezed. Whir in blender with alcohol, vinegar, glycerine to make extracts (or water, to freeze). Best *fresh* for nervine properties. Super nourishing to nerves, quells drug withdrawal. Best in steady, long-term doses. It's mild and building but profound. Dried tops or oat straw = rich in minerals, B vitamins, use for bones and nourishment. Commonly grown as a cover crop, most readily available as cover crop seed High Mowing Organic Seeds, Johnny's Select Seeds, Strictly Medicinals, etc.

- Reishi Mushroom (Ganoderma lucidum, G. tsugae, and other species). Grow It: Available wild and cultivated as a medicinal varnish wood conk shelf mushroom. Can be cultivated on logs, "totems," and sawdust spawn bags (match to preferred species, such as hemlock for G. tsugae) in shady spots. You can put spawn cookies in recently fallen tree stumps. Also found wild, here most often available on hemlocks in late summer (annual). Widely available in medicinal mushroom commerce. If wildcrafting, consider waiting until after it has released spores (dusty appearance) to support its reproduction. **Properties**: A very gentle, building, supportive nervine-adaptogen-tonic, liver tonic, with anti-inflammatory and the usual immune tonic polysaccharide actions. Strengthens the lungs, energy, oxygen utilization over time. Calms shen/heart (TCM) to help those who are restless, anxious, can't sleep, experiencing "adrenal fatigue." Also consider in allergies and autoimmune disease as a long-term tonic. **How to Use It:** Best as a long, slow hot water extract – decoction tea or broth (especially if ground/powdered fruiting body) for polysaccharides, but other activities are available in tincture or double-extraction form. Mycelium may also have benefit (most often sold as capsules). Powder extracts (but note a few weird case reports of liver damage from powdered products, apparently from mushroom-drug interactions that were not an issue with hot water extracts). Cautions: Generally well tolerated. Some people are allergic or react to mushrooms. Some debate over mushrooms in SIBO and autoimmune disease. In most cases I find it beneficial, but discontinue if it seems to disagree. May have blood-thinning activities that could interact with blood-thinning medication or be inappropriate before surgery. See above comment on powder extracts.
- Roses (*Rosa* spp. wild/heirloom *rugosa*, *centifolia*, *damascena*, *gallica*), any that have a nice rosy scent, good flavor, unsprayed. Add to water (cold, steep for hours), make extracts (especially sweet glycerites or honeys!), sprinkle into tea blends. Stop and smell the roses, good for workaholics experiencing panic attacks, the broken hearted, those who need to love and take care of themselves
- These are just a few! Also check out **Catnip** aerial (*Nepeta cataria*), **Wood Betony** flowering aerial (*Stachys officinalis* syn *Betonica officinalis*), **Korean Licorice Mint** aerial (*Agastache rugosa*), **Anise Hyssop** aerial (*A. foeniculum*), German **Chamomile** flowers (*Matricaria chamomilla* syn *M. recutita*), **Linden** flower/bract maybe leaves (*Tilia* spp.), **Mimosa, Bacopa** (*Bacopa monnieri*)...

Sedatives

Useful for sleep, anxiety, some types of pain. May over-sedate and make some people sluggish, depressed, melancholic with regular use (this really depends on the herb and the person, though). Caution with the stronger sedatives alongside sedative medications including mood, anti-anxiety, sleep meds, and some pain medications – they may increase sedation synergistically.

- <u>California Poppy</u> (*Eschscholzia californica*) **Grow It:** Common desert wildflower, grow from seed or seedling in sunny warm spot, likes to sprout near rocks or rock walls. Tolerates dry soil but can't have too much competition when self-seeding. Sometimes will grow in meadow/(minimally mowed) lawn in community. **Properties**: Think of it as a mild, safe opiate though it's doesn't really contain opiates and is not addictive but MUCH gentler than its other poppy-family counterparts. Aids sleep, swirling thoughts, bratty moments, off sleep cycles, *mild* nonaddictive pain relief. Great when sleep and pain issues coincide. Kid friendly. Also eases spastic coughs as a relaxant. **How to Use It**: Harvest *entire* plant, ideally when flowering *and* in seed to tincture (or dry for tea). Aerial parts are useful, but the trippy translucent orange roots are the strongest. Best tinctured fresh but potentially serviceable as tea, capsule, syrup, vinegar, oxymel, dried. **Cautions**: Though non-addictive, I would probably err on the side of caution and not use in people with opioid addictions (refer to someone more experienced in this than I) and w/drug tests. See general sedative cautions.
- <u>Valerian</u> (*Valeriana officinalis*). **Grow It:** This is a tall garden flower perennial that gets bigger each year and rampantly self seeds in ideal growing environments: damp meadows, rich soil, organic farms, old pastures. Prefers full sun. Might be stronger in rockier soil. The roots smell horrible (skunk-dirt-stinky feet) but the white flower heads (sometimes with tinges of pink or purple) smell nice, like honeysuckle and hotel soap, perhaps with a slight hint of the root aroma. I have been called

- to organic farms where it's become overrun, filled my trunk, and been told "That's ALL you're taking???" Beware. But, gosh, it's lovely when in bloom! **Properties**: Potent sedative reducing sleep latency, warming (best for cold, thin, anxious people), relaxes muscles and muscular pain. High doses ok at bedtime. Tweaky: some feel agitated (often hot, heavy, easily irritated people) or drugged. **How to Use It:** Fresh root tincture works best though dry tea, tincture, and capsule are serviceable (not quite as strong, more likely to have a negative reaction). The odor is something else. Flavor like sweet, perfume-y dirt. Easy to dig. Root size often correlates to size and age of plant. Make sure to clean out the earthworms! **Cautions**: See general ones above and prior note on it being tweaky.
- Passionflower (Passiflora incarnata) This herbaceous vine has a stunning, otherworldly flower with a lovely aroma! Grow It: Semi-tropical from the southeastern U.S. that might tolerate zones up to the edge of 6 in a protected spot or if moved indoors or into a greenhouse for winter. In warmer zones, it grows prolifically and can get weedy. Will need some sort of trellis system and can provide shade for other plants in polyculture. Many species and cultivars, but only one is generally used medicinally (others could be toxic), and it's often mislabeled in nurseries. Buy from a reputable supplier like Strictly Medicinals. Likes heat and moisture think: Florida. Properties: Overall cooling, sedating, relaxing, nervine herb. Useful for anxiety, sleep, cardiovascular health, stress, anger/irritation, excess/heat/yang energy. Excellent in formulas. For some it's great in daytime to quell anxiety or irritation whereas in others it could make them very sleepy. It's one of our BEST, most reliable herbs for sleep, solo or in formula, even for people who are weaning off sleep medications (which is challenging and also requires doctor supervision) see general cautions to avoid over-sedation synergy. How to Use It: Aerial parts, ideally in flower, fresh or recently dried/good quality. Tincture fresh or dry. Tea. Possibly vinegar/oxymel (alkaloid-rich). Great in blends. Relatively strong. Cautions: General sedative cautions. Kid friendly.
- **Skullcap** (Scutellaria lateriflora) (and closely related marsh skullcap S. galericulata) is common (but not generally prolific) wild on the edges of fresh water including lakes and rivers where forest hummus and sandy, waterlogged soils meet, growing amongst the bugleweed and wild mint and maybe even some cranberries. **Grow It:** Finicky to grow, you'll likely have boom and bust years, years it comes back, years it doesn't. It likes nutrient-rich soil with good moisture, part sun to full sun (as long as it's not too hot and dry). It does not like a lot of competition from mulch or other plants. It will grow via underground root runners and, if it decides to come back, might move to warm spots on the edge of raised beds or walkways. **Properties**: Nice general sedative-nervine to quell agitation and anxiety, bringing the central nervous system (CNS) down a notch. "Caps the skull," specific when hypersensitive to everything (noise, light, sound, scratchy fabric, touch, someone breathing next to them in bed, foods). Useful in anxiety, insomnia, ADHD, autism spectrum disorders, pain, headaches. Muscle- and nerve-relaxing properties. Nervine trophorestorative for stress, anxiety, frustration, but in some people it's too sedating. Mild bitter digestive. Old fashioned remedy for epilepsy/seizures with modest benefit preventatively or at the early onset. How to Use It: Best fresh or (weaker) freshly dried. Loses potency quickly in all forms. Dry carefully hanging or in single layer with good airflow and not too much heat or humidity. Excellent fresh plant tincture, acceptable as vinegar, oyxmel, glycerite, tea. LOTS of quality issues in commerce. Cautions: Very safe and kid-friendly, but some people find it overly sedative in daytime or possibly even melancholy/depression-inducing whereas most find it quite pleasant and blissful. Relatively fast acting with long-term benefits. Problems: 1. Most of what's on the market is poor quality (inappropriately dried, stored, kept too long) and 2. Adulterated by other species of skullcap (meh) and/or germander (big issue: germander is liver toxic). Know your source! Double-check seed and seedling identity! 7Song has nice ID pics/details online. I like Zack Woods, iFarm, Strictly Medicinals, Found Well Farm, Gaia, and Herbalist & Alchemist.
- <u>Magnolia</u> (*Magnolia* spp.) is popularly planted in yards and old farms. **Grow It:** All species are medicinal with *M. offinalis* being the species popular in TCM, with local species popularized by Leslita Williams. The aroma is a good indicator of potency pleasant, lemongrass-y, root-beer-y. The species I use is a *stellata-kobus* hybrid. Magnolias can be somewhat finicky to grow because they're prone to disease but are also very graceful, with gorgeous blooms in spring. **Properties**: Magnolia

bark (stronger) and flower (similar properties) have a lot of different uses. I use to balance cortisol and inappropriate cortisol spikes (insomnia, stress, anxiety, with additional blood sugar and anti-inflammatory support). For that person who wakes at 2 am in alarm mode. Somewhat nervine-adaptogen-like and excellent in formula day or night. **How to Use It:** Bark/twigs harvested anytime. I prefer younger green branches midsummer. Tincture fresh. Alkaloid-rich and aromatic. Vinegar/oxymel should also work. Acceptable as tea. **Cautions**: None known.

Antidepressants

Note that depression is complex and difficult to work with when severe. Also adaptogens, nervines, FE.

- <u>St. John's Wort</u> (*Hypericum perforatum*) Harvest/use fresh flowers and buds after hot, sunny week in hot, sunny, gravely spot for strongest medicine. Turns tinctures, oils red. Internally nervine, antidepressant (long-term), immune antiviral, nerve restorative (ie: after injury). Topical for burns, pain (especially nerve), mild sunscreen, heals wounds. Internally interacts with many pharmaceuticals, may cause photosensitivity in fair skinned. Topical should be fine.
- <u>Mimosa</u> (*Albizia julibrissin*) A small graceful tree, harvest the bark (stronger) in spring or fall or flowers, one of the more fast-acting and reliable mood-lifting herbs, also anti-anxiety. Called "tree of collective happiness." Tincture, tea, fresh, dry. Hardy to about zone 6. Invasive in Bible Belt.

Peaceful, Relaxing & Mood-Lifting Recipes

General Herb Doses:

Unless specified, all herbs are generally appropriate in the following doses. Start low and work up to the dose that agrees with you. Repeat dose 1-3 times per day with a little food.

- **Tinture**: 1 ml (30 drops) 5 ml (1 teaspoon), diluted in a little water/drink
- **Tea** (Infusion): 1 tsp − 1 tbsp per cup water, steeped 15 minutes or longer
- Water/Seltzer Infusion: lighly flavored/medicinal, aromatic, sweet 2 sprigs per serving or 3 big sprigs per liter infused for 30 minutes (hours for roses). Drink that day.
- **Glycerite, Oxymel, Syrup, Vinegar**: 1 ml to 1 teaspoon or more
- Capsule: 1-2 crude "00" capsules or as directed on label of product

Tincture, Glycerite or Oxymel Ideas

- Lemon Balm + SJW
- Oat + Holy Basil + Mimosa + Skullcap
- Motherwort + Ashwagandha + Oat

• Simples of Motherwort, Schizandra, Holy Basil, Mimosa...

Tea Blend & Water/Seltzer Infusion Ideas

- Sleep Tea: Passionflower + Lemon Balm + Skullcap + Spearmint + Honey: 2 teaspoons steeped 15 minutes in 4-6 oz teacup
- Holy Basil + Rose
- Holy Basil + Lemon Balm
- Korean Licorice Mint + Oat Tops + Roses
- Korean Licorice Mint + Vanilla (root beer!)
- Green Tea + KLM or Lemon Balm sprig

DIY Fresh Herb Tincture

This method works best for almost all listed herbs, though a few could be done dry instead. Chop and SHOVE as much plant material into a jar as you can fit. Cover with 40-95% alcohol (ex: vodka, whole grain) to the tippity top. Without measuring, this comes to about 1 oz herb to 2 oz solvent. Let macerate 1 month. Strain. Most tinctures keep 6+ years.

Favorite Sources for Plants

Seeds

- Strictly Medicinal Seeds (Oregon) strictlymedicinalseeds.com
- High Mowing Organic Seeds (Vermont) highmowingseeds.com

Mail-Order Plant Seedlings

• Strictly Medicinal Seeds (Oregon) strictlymedicinalseeds.com

- Companion Plants (Ohio) companionplants.com
- Growers Exchange (Virginia) thegrowers-exchange.com
- Mountain Gardens (North Carolina) mountaingardensherbs.com

New England Herb Seedling Farms

• The Herb FARMacy (Salisbury, MA) theherbfarmacy.com

- Zack Woods Herb Farm (Vermont) zackwoodsherbs.com
- Warner River Organics (Webster, NH) facebook.com/WarnerRiverOrganics
- iFarm (Boxford, MA) ifarmboxford.com
- NH Herbal Network Herb & Garden Day in June in Canterbury, NH nhherbalnetwork.wordpress.com/herbday
- And there are PLENTY more herb farms out there if you look and ask around!