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NC-NATURALPRODUCTS.ORG

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# North Carolina Natural Products Association

OCTOBER 2013

## Ginseng: An Important Note from NCNPA and AHPA

Ginseng has been the star in the media recently, introducing millions of people to a plant they may be unfamiliar with. The NC Natural Products Association would like to thank Michael McGuffin, president of the American Herbal Products Association, for speaking on this matter. The below is a response Mr. McGuffin wrote to CBS after their segment on ginseng:

"The statement on your report on ginseng poaching that 90 percent of exported wild ginseng is illegally harvested is completely unsubstantiated. It also ignores the many ginseng collectors who work within the system and harvest wild ginseng when and where allowed, and with respect for private property ownership, public land use, and the strict

regulations that govern ginseng harvest, including in North Carolina.

[...] The production and export of cultivated ginseng exceeds that of wild ginseng by at least 10-fold. But wild and cultivated American ginseng are considered to be entirely different products in the Asian market, and the consumer of the wild is not a customer for the standard agricultural product.

That may be changing though, as there is an emerging industry of growers of "woodsgrown" and "wild-simulated" ginseng. This type of cultivation occurs in the same woodland habitat in which wild ginseng is found, and is managed to more

closely mimic the environment encountered by the wild plants.

Legitimate collectors and dealers of wild American ginseng engage in well-established sustainable harvest practices. And the production of woodsgrown and wild-simulated ginseng are important innovations in production of this plant for the Asian market."



## Blue Ridge Naturally Workshop a Big Success

On September 14, over 100 growers, natural products manufacturers, raw material herb buyers, educators, and others attended the Blue Ridge Naturally event at AB Tech. The event helped connect current and potential medicinal plant growers with manufacturers and raw material buyers for the natural products industry in North Carolina. Feature panelists of

new and experienced medicinal herb growers and natural products manufacturers/buyers discussed their unique experiences, challenges, goals, and needs as they relate to natural products and raw materials. Detailed workshop notes will soon be posted on Dr. Jeanine Davis' [Alternative Crops and Organics](#) [b](#) [l](#) [o](#) [g](#).

The new [Blue Ridge Naturally™](#) brand was also discussed, which was created to raise awareness of the superiority of raw material and natural products coming from the mountains of North Carolina. More information about the brand can be found on page 2



## Blue Ridge Naturally™ Updates

We would like to give a huge thank you to Sarah Oram, the former Blue

Ridge Naturally™ brand administrator. Sarah did an amazing job laying the foundation for the roll out the Blue Ridge Naturally™ brand. Former NCNPA board member Jennifer Flynn is the new administrator. Her unique background in both business development and the natural products industry are already proving

invaluable to the development of the brand.

Blue Ridge Naturally™'s mission is to raise awareness of the superiority of botanical raw materials and quality natural products (personal care, pet care, cleaning, tinctures and supplements, functional food and beverages) from the our region.

The aim of Blue Ridge Naturally™ is to support local companies crafting high quality natu-

ral products and to develop the WNC natural products industry. To date, four local companies are seal users: Botanics Trading, New Sun, Shecology, and SkinFare. Other companies including Red Moon Herbs, Native Touch, and M&J Dog are in the pipeline for Blue Ridge Naturally certification.

To learn more about Blue Ridge Naturally™, please email [seal@blueridgenaturally.org](mailto:seal@blueridgenaturally.org) or call 708-BRG-SEAL

*"Sales of herbal dietary supplements in the United States increased by 5.5% in 2012, reaching a total estimated figure of nearly \$5.6 billion"*  
- American Botanical Council

## Medicinal Herb Growers Club Forming

Based on widespread interest from growers across the region, a Western North Carolina Herb Club is being formed. The purpose of this group is to support current and interested growers specializing in medicinal herbs by providing educational programs and networking opportunities, and by strengthening market opportunities. Meetings will be held across western North

Carolina every other month. Each meeting will have an educational component followed by a potluck meal. Topics will include cultivation and propagation practices, harvesting, post-harvest handling, market opportunities, market regulations, and certifications. Whenever possible a hands-on component will be incorporated into events. We encourage anyone interested to attend -

from seasoned producers to beginning hobbyists. The next meeting will be November 21 at 4 pm at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research & Extension Center in Mills River. To register and for more information, please contact Madison County extension agent Jenn Beck at 828-649-2411 or [jenn\\_beck@ncsu.edu](mailto:jenn_beck@ncsu.edu)

## The NCNPA Board

Annice Brown, The Small Business Technology and Development Center

Alison Dressler, NCSU Mountain Horticultural Crops Research & Extension Center

Jeannie Dunn, Red Moon Herbs

Caroline Edwards, Kudzu Cow Farm

Hope Huskey, Sequoyah Fund

Rick Jackson, McGuire, Wood & Bisette law firm

Laralyn Riverwind, Native Touch

Clare Schwartz, French Broad Food Co-Op

Mary Williams Matthews, Johnson Price Sprinkle, PA

The unique environment of WNC provides ideal growing conditions for many popular herbs used worldwide



As we welcome new Board members, we would like to express our gratitude for our long-term members. Detailed biographies can be found on our website.

Chuck Blethen, Jewel of the Blue Ridge

## Annual Retreat: NCNPA Reflects on Past Successes, Needs Your Support for Future Growth



*View from Jewel of Blue Ridge vineyard where NCNPA held it's annual retreat*

In late July, the Board Members of NCNPA took time out of our busy work schedules to dedicate the day to strategizing about how NCNPA can be more effective in strengthening the natural products industry of Western North Carolina. We truly believe that there is strong potential for the natural products industry to be a catalyst for job creation and economic growth. A big thank you to

Adrienne Gordon of the Small Business Technology and Development Center for being our wonderful facilitator.

We are unique in that our Board members come from very diverse backgrounds, but complement each other's skills seamlessly. We have board members who are farmers/growers, business owners, lawyers, industry representatives, government employees, and accountants. Each member is focusing his or her specialization on where our passion lies: encouraging natural product manufacturers to be successful and enabling farmers to diversify their farm income by growing raw materials for the industry.

We wish to engage more public knowledge of and participation in

the myriad activities we are involved in organizing. We hope this newsletter reveals just how much work we are putting into making the natural products industry a platform for economic development in our region.

But we need your help! As a registered 501(c)(3) we are dependent upon grants and donations. We would like to hold more workshops and conferences and continue to serve as a voice for the natural products industry in North Carolina. Please consider becoming a Supporter of NCNPA. Your support will allow us to continue the important work we are doing, and will also offer you discounts to upcoming conferences focusing on natural products development. Please visit our [PayPal page](#) to become a Supporter.

***Please consider becoming a Supporter of the NCNPA for an tax-deductible annual due of \$25.***

## Synergy of WNC Natural Products Industry of WNC Touted by Industry Leaders

The Nutritional Business Journal, a leading industry magazine, recently featured many of the key organizations and institutions that are actively working to promote the vertical integration of the natural products industry in Western North Carolina. For two years, the North Carolina Natural Products Association, which is comprised of NCNPA, NC State University's Mountain Horticultural Crops Research & Extension

Center, Bent Creek Institute & the US Botanical Safety Laboratory (USBSL), Blue Ridge Food Ventures (BRFV) Natural Products Laboratory, the BioBusiness Network (BBN), Advantage West, and the Small Business Technology and Development Center (SBTDC) have worked together to strengthen the natural products industry from growing the raw material (NCSU), to formulating (BRFV) and testing the product

(USBSL and BBN), through to marketing and branding

(BRFV and NCNPA with the Blue Ridge Naturally brand). The Nutritional Business Journal emphasizes the unique strengths this region possesses to develop the industry in WNC.

Other key industry players are also recognizing the distinctiveness of our region's assets. In March, the [NC Natural Products Association won the Best Partnership Award](#) at the Natural Products Expo West in Anaheim, CA. To receive one of eight specialized awards at the largest trade show in the United States is quite an honor.



WNC Industry representatives at ExpoWest

# Letter from the President



2013 has been an exciting year for our organization. We finally were able to hire a Brand Administrator and roll out the BRN Seal. As of October 1st we had 10 companies who have been able to pass the application process and testing in order to start using the BRN Seal on their products. We also conducted a very successful workshop where we had natural products buyers matched up with natural product producers. In addition we were able to start the activities for the ginseng subgroup within the NCNPA. The participants in the Ginseng Expo in December of 2012 requested that we provide such a group within the NCNPA. We have added several new people to our Board of Directors and broadened our reach with new talent as well as geographically. We have had our first international contacts responding to our BRN Seal program. They are excited to know that we now have a way to identify those companies who grow and/or make natural products from North Carolina. NCNPA officer elections are coming up in November. A new slate of officers and a new budget will provide ample challenges for 2014. We are always aware



North Carolina  
Natural Products  
Association  
PO Box 4  
Marshall NC 28753

## North Carolina Natural Products Association Mission Statement:

The North Carolina Natural Products Association (NCNPA) was formed over 10 years ago as a 501c (3) non-profit organization dedicated to conserving, cultivating, sustainably harvesting, and processing North Carolina grown medicinal plants. NCNPA's mission is to establish North Carolina as a key global supplier of premium-quality raw materials and plant-based value added products such as natural medicines, organic products, functional foods, and personal care products.

### Purpose:

- Educate individuals, agencies, and organizations about the North Carolina's natural products industry.
- Promote North Carolina grown and manufactured natural products.
- Bring together farmers and the natural products industry to explore growing and marketing opportunities.
- Encourage conservation and stewardship of North Carolina's botanical resources.
- Promote North Carolina as one of the leading producers of safe, natural therapeutic products and services.  
Monitor and disseminate information on regulatory measures pertaining to the natural products industry. Sponsor conferences and regional workshops.
- Encourage safe, effective, and high quality natural products manufacturing standards.
- Alert supporters to emerging opportunities in the natural products industry.

## A Note From the Editor:

Thank you for taking the time to catch up with the NCNPA. We have a lot to share and a lot of catching up to do. As the new editor of the newsletter, I am looking forward to sharing our newsletter on a monthly basis. Please send any information that may be of interest to NCNPA members to [Alison\\_dressler@ncsu.edu](mailto:Alison_dressler@ncsu.edu).



Thank you!  
Until next time,  
Alison