



# Medicinal and aromatic plants in Croatia

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## Outline

- Introduction
- Current situation
- Problems, future trends



## 1. Introduction

- In Croatia there are more than 600 wild medicinal, aromatic and honey plant species, 120 of which are traditionally used in folk medicine, as food, for bee grazing (honey and other honey products), production of powder, juices, elixirs, tinctures, oils, spirits
- During the last decade, the production of medicinal plants in Croatia has shown a tendency of constant increase
- A part of the production is associated to the collecting of wild plants, while a part is related to cultivation
- Cultivation of medicinal plants should be encouraged in the same way as olive cultivation, not only because of its positive effects on human health but also because of the development of Croatia's most important economic sector – tourism
- Some farmers have recognized that certain products, such as lavender oil can be sold as autochthonous Croatian souvenirs



## 2. Current situation

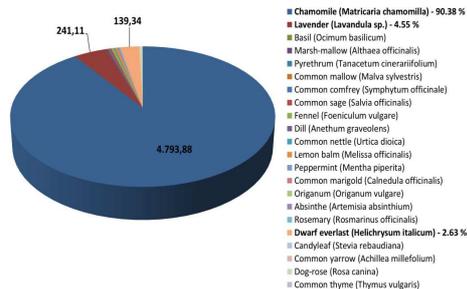
- Current production of aromatic and medicinal plants in Croatia is estimated on 5304 ha (data for 2015)
- The chamomile (*Matricaria chamomila*) production represents 90% of total production, followed by lavender (*Lavandula anustifolia*) with 5% and dwarf everlast (*Helichrysum italicum*) with 3%
- Croatia was one of the leading producers of chamomile and lavender in the world before war in the 1990s
- The production of other medicinal plants (*Calendula officinalis*, *Foeniculum vulgare*, *Melissa officinalis*, *Mentha piperita*, *Valeriana officinalis*, *Althaea officinalis*, *Malva Sylvestris*) is estimated to be less than 10% of total production
- Giving consideration to lavender and chamomile example, it is obvious that climate diversity, location of Croatia in Northern Temperate Zone, different types of soil and abundance of water positively influence cultivation of medicinal plants



## 2. Current situation

- A Trade Association for production and processing medicinal herbs is active in Croatia. Their main activity is suggesting measures of economic policy, amendments of existing legal regulations concerning herb gathering, herb quality, its marketing etc.

Total area planted  
with aromatic herbs in  
the Republic of Croatia for  
the period of 2015



## 2. Current situation → problems

- The production is fragmented and is not organized
- A inadequate number of official producers with high quality products
- The technology of production is not well developed and uniformed for particular species or cultivars
- Insufficient knowledge about medicinal plants cultivation
- Lack of mechanization, inadequate storage area, unequipped work area



## 2. Current situation → future trends and opportunities

- The current trend in Croatia is the development of organic agriculture in attempt to fulfill market's demands for healthy food
- As an example, the production of lavender and chamomile in Croatia can be regarded as organic (although not all with official certification)
- With appropriate development organic cultivation of medicinal plants could become an important economic activity
- Possibility of production of secondary products, original autochthonous products → touristic product
- Certain areas in Croatia with high potential for cultivation of medicinal plants are not well exploited → an example is the Split-Dalmatia and Istria County rich with herbal genetic sources of medicinal aromatic and honey-producing herbs a part of which has not been completely researched yet despite the great possibilities it can offer to the local population



## 2. Current situation → an example of successful companies

**FITOAROMA, ISTRIA**  
Brand for natural cosmetics



**HISTRICA AROMATICA, ISTRIA**  
Brand for natural cosmetics and medicinal herbal  
preparations, Park with Aromatic plants, Tourism

