

1/1/2019

Lovely Lavender

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Lavender the color hit the runways last spring and has been trending for winter apparel. But what about lavender plants? Whether it's because of their usefulness and current trends toward essential oils (bath bombs, anyone?) or just because of how gorgeous they are in the landscape, they're starting to catch the eye of consumers.

"Our distribution company Ball Seed has seen 10% year-over-year growth in lavender sales since 2014," notes Bill Calkins, business manager for independent garden centers at Ball Seed. "That is significant and we consider lavender a very key crop."

Bill, who publishes an annual magazine called Flourish for independent retailers, highlights the benefits and uses of lavender in a recent issue (and I might add one—they're often deer resistant):

- Grown for DIY projects (a plant that "does something" for the user)
- Aromatherapy, health and wellness
- Bringing flowers indoors (both fresh cut and potted)
- Edible use in culinary recipes
- Pollinator-friendly! **GP**