

French growers up in arms over EU's pending label requirements for lavender

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Next year, the European Commission is set to release guidelines for warning labels on products made with lavender oil, which reportedly can cause allergic reactions for some people. But lavender growers in France are putting up a fight, and some are even threatening to quit the business altogether if the rules go into effect, according to an article in *Chemical & Engineering News*, the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society.

Alex Scott, a senior editor at *C&EN*, writes that at least one lavender producer has notified the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) that the essential oils from the plant can cause [allergic reactions](#). These oils have been valued widely, however, since ancient times for their fragrance and are now in an amazing array of consumer products from soap to honey. The oils also are also used as a mild antiseptic and anti-inflammatory agent.

ECHA has responded to the allergy concern by saying it will classify the oils as a "skin sensitizer." Officially categorized as such, the European Union will have to require warning [labels](#) on associated products starting in 2018. In response, an industry group representing 1,500 growers of fragrant and medicinal plants in France launched a campaign this summer to fight the labeling requirements. Some have said if the guidelines go into effect, they would rather switch to growing a different plant than put a warning label on their [lavender-oil](#) products. But so far, regulators are moving forward as planned, working on what the labels should say. They expect to conclude discussions next year.

Provided by American Chemical Society

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