Well Earth

Frontier’s Well Earth sustainable sourcing program finds and develops ethical sources of high quality botanical products from around the world. We get close to the farmers who grow our crops and create respectful, long-term and mutually beneficial partnerships that include working directly with the farmers on production methods. The program enables us to improve the quality of our products and increase our in-stock rates while supporting small farmers around the world who are committed to sustainability. We provide grants to Well Earth partners to support learning new skills, further their knowledge of organic production, improve operations, and support community development. Our Well Earth program is good for our suppliers, their communities, the environment, our co-op, and our customers.

Learn more about Well Earth and meet our Well Earth suppliers at www.frontiercoop.com/wellearth

Herbs from Bulgaria

Travel with us on a sourcing trip to Bulgaria and learn about herbs in their natural habitat.

» Recipe for Bountiful Bulgarian Tea
Firsthand Look at Bulgarian Herbs

On a visit to our Well Earth partner in Bulgaria, we traveled the countryside. Amazed at the rich diversity of plants, we recognized many as herbs that we sell or grow in our own backyards. (The herbal tradition in the United States is based on plants that were used by American natives, such as echinacea and black cohosh, as well as Eurasian herbs, such as the dandelion, red clover and burdock that Early American settlers brought with them.) What most impressed us, though, was the vigor with which these familiar herbs thrived in their native lands. Growing in dense colonies of color, texture and shapes along roadsides and fields, in wild meadows and at forest edges, the plants seemed to hum with energy and health. Arriving in early summer, we found many of the plants in bloom, including yarrow, linden, elder, mullein, chicory, St. John’s wort, mugwort and wild raspberry. Lemon balm was already being harvested from the farms, and calendula, lavender, and chamomile flowers stocked the drying sheds.

Some of the herbs we source from our Bulgarian Well Earth partner are grown on small farms, where they are expanding organic cultivation. Others are responsibly wild crafted, in accordance with government regulations. Certified organic wild harvested herbs have additional documentation to insure they’re organic.

In celebration of our Bulgarian herbs, we suggest enjoying a cup of the following tea, a delightful blend of two flowers, two leaves, and two berries. It’s mild, herbal, and refreshing, yet comforting, too, much like the Bulgarian countryside. It’s also lovely to look at, both before steeping and as a beverage!

To make, simply combine equal parts elderberries, rosehips, nettle leaf, lemon balm leaf, red clover blossoms and linden flowers. Using 1 teaspoon of the blend per cup of tea, steep for about five minutes, then strain. Serve sweetened or unsweetened, hot or iced.

ELDERBERRY
These dark purple, wrinkled berries have a fruity aroma and a sweet/sour, fruity flavor. Rich in European lore, they’ve long been used to make teas, syrups, and wines. Frontier’s elderberry is wildcrafted in Bulgaria.

ROSEHIPS
The fruit of wild roses, rosehips are a lovely addition to a variety of potpourris and herbal tea blends. (They’re especially delicious when combined with mints.) Our Bulgarian rosehips are wildcrafted.

NETTLE
This prickly, robust plant produces valuable leaves, seeds, and roots. It’s used as a food, in traditional remedies, and as a fiber and dye source. The leaf—often included in spring tonics—has a pleasant, herbaceous, slightly bitter flavor. Our Bulgarian nettle is wildcrafted.

LEMON BALM
A popular tea herb, lemon balm tastes lemony but not too citrusy. It has fresh, minty undertones and an herbaceous appeal. Bees love the scent! Our lemon balm is cultivated in Bulgaria.

RED CLOVER BLOSSOMS
Stunning in potpourris and delicious in teas, red clover blossoms are beautiful and sweet. They’re often used in tonics as well as salves. Fresh blossoms are lovely in salads, too! Our clover blossoms are cultivated in Bulgaria.

LINDEN FLOWERS
Considered a sacred tree in Slavic mythology, the linden grows valuable, nectar-producing flowers. These fragrant, yellow/white flowers make a wonderful herbal tea. They’re also often added to bath water for a soothing soak. Our Bulgarian linden flowers are wildcrafted.

Learn more about Bulgarian herbs and other related topics at www.frontiercoop.com