

Date: December 9, 1996 HC 12-9-6-2

To: General Distribution

Re: Profile of Geranium Oil

Lis-Balchin, Maria. Geranium Oil. *The International Journal of Aromatherapy*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1996, pp. 18-19.

The true geranium oil of commerce comes from plants of the *Pelargonium* genus, which originated mainly in South Africa and have since have been hybridized all over the world. Not to be confused with *G. robertianum* or *maculatum*, the geranium of Culpeper's Herbal, pelargoniums are not hardy plants and do not grow wild in Europe. The main species are *P. capitatum*, *P. graveolens*, and *P. radens*. The cultivar Rosé, a hybrid of *P. radens* and *P. capitatum*, is the source of the well-known geranium oil "Bourbon" from the island of Réunion. There is concern about widespread adulteration of commercial geranium oil, best illustrated by the sudden dramatic "increase" in supply of Bourbon oil on the market. As this oil is only produced from plants growing on the island of Réunion, it is essentially impossible for the supply to have increased as much as is reflected on the market. It is clear that much of the oil being sold as Bourbon oil is not.

Geranium oil is used in the folk medicines of the South African Sotho, Xhosa, Hottentots, and Zulu people. It is indicated where analgesic, antimicrobial, antifungal, sedative, and antispasmodic properties are needed: e.g. for nervous tension, colds, bronchitis, laryngitis, and distressing symptoms of menopause. Pelargonium has been used for wounds, abscesses, fever reduction, colic, suppression of urine, colds and sore throats, hemorrhoids, gonorrhoea, and for worms. Its use as an insecticide and insect repellent has also been well-documented. —*Ginger Webb*

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