



dōTERRA

Essential Oils from India

A Co-Impact Sourcing Story



Peppermint Farmers

dōTERRA's Sourcing in India

dōTERRA's sourcing of essential oils from India is integral to the pursuit of purity. Home to over 1.3 billion people across 28 states and 8 union territories, India is rich in cultural, religious, and natural diversity. Livelihoods in rural India are primarily based on agriculture and associated sectors, with over 70% of rural households primarily dependent on farming income. Our emphasis on best agricultural practices, fair and on-time payments, and expanded market opportunities contribute to higher incomes and improved livelihoods.

Peppermint

In the states of Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, located in the north of the country, thousands of farmers grow and harvest *Mentha piperita*, commonly known as peppermint. dōTERRA's demand for pure and natural peppermint oil is unique in the market. Most companies target a certain price point or chemical profile, which often results in other mint species being substituted for or blended to create a "peppermint" profile. By refusing to accept this common practice, dōTERRA ensures that we support these farmers to continue their production of true *Mentha piperita*.

Together with our sourcing partner and Farms and Farmers, we have been working for years to scale-up peppermint nurseries, plantations, and advisory services to a select group of farmers in Bihar, one of the poorest states of the country. Our aim has been to help these farmers increase their revenues and profit margins through peppermint production so they can further invest in their farms, families, and communities. After initial setbacks due to extreme weather, this project has taken hold and is inspiring additional farmers, especially younger generations, to add peppermint to their annual crop rotation.



Spearmint

Farmers will often grow spearmints for 5 months, harvest, and then plant rice, wheat, or mustard during alternating seasons. By rotating crops like this, farmers typically increase their income by as much as 40% per year. Following the harvest, nearby community distillation units distill the spearmint for eight hours. The post-distilled biomass is then dried out and reused to fuel the distillation boiler, a proven sustainable practice. Farmers then take their oil directly to our sourcing partner for purity testing and can be paid within an hour.



Turmeric

Turmeric, a rhizome or underground stem from which roots grow, is typically dried, ground up, and used as a spice. Cultivating turmeric alongside corn, sugarcane, and other crops provides nutrients and serves as a natural weed and pest management system for the soil. Sugarcane planted in soils following turmeric often have a significantly higher yield as well, contributing to additional income-generating opportunities. Both men and women harvest turmeric, but women are typically responsible for cleaning and then sorting the turmeric rhizomes into various grades based on size and application—the fresh market or for further processing. Our turmeric essential oil is a proprietary blend produced through steam distillation of both fresh and dried rhizomes. This blend gives our Turmeric oil both a unique aroma and chemical profile.



Holy Basil/Tulsi

Holy Basil, or *Tulsi* in Hindi, is wild harvested in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu. It is one of the most frequently used medicinal herbs in India and is also named the “The Incomparable One.” The optimal harvesting season is between January and February and the harvested crops typically need to be distilled within 72 hours to obtain the highest oil yield. Harvesters only cut the upper part of the plant and preserve the roots for the next season. Our sourcing partner has been working with smallholder farmers to establish small-scale cultivation and implement sustainable harvesting practices to ensure sustainability of this sacred plant.





Lemongrass

Most of the farmers in the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha, an eastern state on the Bay of Bengal, are from a tribal population. Farmers in this area of Odisha have historically only been grown one crop, rice paddy, which typically does not provide a substantial income. Most of these farmers did not know of a viable cash crop that would be suitable for their land.

In 2015, a small number of enterprising farmers began working with Farms and Farmers on a pilot lemongrass project. Through coordinated efforts between these farmers, dōTERRA, our sourcing partner, and Farms and Farmers, some unused, barren tribal land was cultivated with lemongrass. Due to limited crop management knowledge and only a single inefficient distillation unit in the area, farmers and distillers were only producing around 40% of optimal oil yields. To overcome these obstacles, we funded Farms and Farmers to offer a targeted training program for local farmers to improve and scale up their production. We also donated the funds to build a new, efficient lemongrass distillery. Consequently, smallholder farmers, particularly women involved in the project, have increased their income by as much as five times.

Social Impact Partner: Angel's Place

Angel's Place provides a safe home for over 160 orphaned and destitute children in Manipur, India along with educational and recreational opportunities. In 2008, Angel's Place acquired 172 hectares (about 425 acres) of land in the hills of Manipur for lemongrass to generate income for the children's home and to provide employment opportunities for the local community. dōTERRA's purchase of lemongrass essential oil from the farmers working with Angel's Place ensures fair market demand and profitability, which enabled the construction of a classroom for the children to receive vocational training in tailoring.





Punjab
Peppermint

Bihar
Peppermint

Uttar Pradesh
Peppermint
Spearmint

Odisha
Lemongrass

Maharashtra
Turmeric

Tamil Nadu
Tulsi

QUICK FACTS

India is the seventh largest country in terms of land mass and the world's second most populated country with more than 1.3 billion people.

India has a tropical climate and the world's most prominent monsoon systems between June and July.

More than 58,000 floral species are native to India and over 100 of these plant species are used for religious worship.

Meaning "life science" in Sanskrit, Ayurveda is one of the world's oldest practices of well-being and uses a large variety of herbs, including Tulsi (Holy Basil).

A mint and spearmint hybrid, Peppermint was found entombed in Egyptian pyramids in about 1000 BC.

India is the world's largest producer of turmeric powder



Odisha Lemongrass Distillery

dōTERRA Healing Hands Foundation has partnered with communities in sourcing areas and has supported projects including updating a high school washroom for girls and working with Days for Girls for distribution of 500+ kits in Odisha.

A partner NGO, **Farms and Farmers**, and our sourcing partner help smallholder farmers improve their livelihood by increasing their income from agricultural activities. The impact from this partnership includes:

- Introducing high-value crops to farmers, including essential oil crops
- Training, agricultural, and crop advisory services
- Nursery and plantation expansion for smallholder farmers
- Health and safety kits
- Providing market opportunities for farmers through the “DeHaat” Program mobile phone apps and other tools

Through dōTERRA's investment, Farms and Farmers has provided new distillation units in the states of Bihar and Odisha to ensure that farmers have access to value-adding technology near their farms. These new distillation units have reduced the burdens of travel for farmers, which allows them to maintain a higher profit margin on their final sold product. Because of dōTERRA's increasing demand, dōTERRA can support over 30,000 farmers in India.



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