



dōTERRA

Frankincense

A CO-IMPACT SOURCING STORY

Frankincense: The Ancient King of Oils

Since ancient times, Frankincense resin has been a highly valued trade commodity by many civilizations, including the Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, Macedonians, and Kushites. These precious resins comprise what is believed to be the world's oldest global supply chain.

dōTERRA's Frankincense essential oil is a proprietary blend of four species of Frankincense resin sourced from northeast Africa and the Arabian peninsula:

Boswellia carterii, *Boswellia frereana*, *Boswellia papyrifera*, and *Boswellia sacra*.

Different Frankincense species thrive in different environments and soil types. For example, *Boswellia carterii* trees grow best in sandy soil, while *Boswellia frereana* trees grow best in dry, rocky terrain.

Boswellia frereana tends to produce the largest resins of the *Boswellia* species.

dōTERRA sources from multiple locations to provide our unique therapeutic-grade, chemical profile blend of *Boswellia* oils and continues to explore opportunities to sustainably source Frankincense in other nearby regions. This sourcing strategy ensures that the resins are harvested from those regions where each *Boswellia* species grows best, while helping to diversify supply pressure on any single Frankincense species.

Sustainability

Frankincense resins have been widely sought for thousands of years. Frankincense trees grow in some of the poorest and most underdeveloped countries in the world. This lack of development and regulation can unfortunately lead to exploitative conditions in the supply chain, incentive to over-harvest, and unhealthy conditions for both the harvesters and the Frankincense trees. Overharvesting is evident in trees that have too many cuts, are cut too deep, or are not allowed to sufficiently rest between cuts. In some areas, land conversion from wild growing areas to cultivated agriculture or grazing areas (particularly in Ethiopia) has cleared out many existing Frankincense trees. Such pressure on the ecological system is threatening to the longevity of the trees and the surrounding biome.

In our pursuit of purity, dōTERRA understands the need for sustainable and responsible sourcing supply chains of Frankincense resins and continues to be a significant leader in driving solutions to help these *Boswellia* trees thrive for generations to come. dōTERRA is proud to be a leading supporter in research and sustainability initiatives to protect these sacred and historic trees, including recently presenting on these successes and lessons learned at the *6th World Congress on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants* (WOCMAP VI).

dōTERRA and our key partners are working closely with the network of harvesting communities and resin-sorting warehouses for continuously improved

traceability and transparency of these harvesting supply chains. dōTERRA has also developed a Harvesting Best Practices Manual and is currently working with partners to conduct tree care trainings with harvesters, beginning with areas that will benefit the most. These ongoing efforts are designed to enhance the harvesters' knowledge of tree health and longevity.

dōTERRA is also leading the charge in terms of propagation initiatives, having developed some of the first nurseries in harvesting areas, which will critically help to ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of the *Boswellia* species.

Oman

In the Sultanate of Oman, known as the jewel of the Arabian Peninsula, dōTERRA works with *Boswellia sacra* harvesters throughout the Dhofar region. Dating back as early as 400 BC, Dhofar was the hub for the Frankincense trail, delivering Frankincense around the world. Over two decades ago, Oman created policies to protect and conserve the *Boswellia* forests as a national heritage. Our *Boswellia sacra* partner is actively engaged in sustainability through regularly monitoring trees to ensure sustainable harvesting practices, as well as running the largest private Frankincense nursery and plantation in Oman with hundreds of trees ranging from four to seven years old—with thousands of smaller trees now growing as well. These propagation efforts will eventually take pressure



Future in propagation:
Recently planted *Boswellia* tree plantation



Resin sorting



Boswellia sacra trees, Oman (Dhofar Region)

off existing *Boswellia* trees and will help replenish their population. By year-end 2020, 20,000 more Frankincense trees will have been planted in Oman.

Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, where dōTERRA sources *Boswellia papyrifera*, over-harvesting of resin is not the principal issue negatively affecting the *Boswellia* tree population. Rather, it is land conversion or cutting down trees to clear space for farming, residential, or commercial purposes. dōTERRA is actively investigating how to best support the reforestation of *Boswellia papyrifera* trees and is developing a propagation program and a sustainable harvesting training program to revitalize the Frankincense tree population in Ethiopia.

Somaliland

dōTERRA's *Boswellia carterii* and *Boswellia frereana* resins come from the Cal Madow mountain range of the self-declared state of Somaliland, primarily concentrated in the Sanaag Region. Approximately one-third of the national population lives in this region, and Frankincense harvesting is the main source of employment.

The trees are passed down for generations through lineage and tribal rights.



dōTERRA has trained and prepared a local team to begin addressing problems facing the Frankincense trees. The team has been collecting initial quantitative forest density and tree health data in Somaliland.

Through dōTERRA's Co-Impact Sourcing® initiative, dōTERRA strives to meet the needs of individuals working in the Frankincense supply chain. For example, dōTERRA has contributed to the construction of warehouses built throughout the mountains where resins are collected. These warehouses function as a cooperative, organizing harvesters, sorters and shopkeepers into a network, helping to ensure that as much value-addition as possible is able to happen in the rural harvesting areas. Through this network, dōTERRA is also able to provide harvesters with fair wages and on-time payments, including food and cash prepayments spread throughout the year. By working closer to the source with those who harvest, collect and sort our Frankincense resins, as opposed to working through multiple layers of middlemen as typically/ historically done in the industry, dōTERRA is able to provide a more stable and reliable income, fairness, employment, and security for those who are participating in these supply chains with us.



THE FRANKINCENSE PROCESS

Frankincense essential oil comes from the resin, or sap, of *Boswellia* trees. Harvesters typically make shallow cuts into the bark, which allow for resin to seep out. The resin is left for approximately two weeks to crystallize into “tears” which are then scraped and collected, with this process repeating over multiple weeks throughout the harvesting season and then the trees are left to rest. Before distillation, the resin tears are carefully cleaned

and sorted by size and color for quality grading—a job traditionally done by women.

dōTERRA's approach is to work as close as possible to the harvesting source areas to ensure that those who harvest and sort the Frankincense tears are compensated fairly and to ensure that as much value-add as possible can happen in the rural harvesting areas.

TANZANIA



Sanaag Specialty Hospital: Anticipated completion early 2020



Facilitating Community Development: dōTERRA Healing Hands Foundation

In addition to the thousands of jobs supported through Frankincense harvesting activities, dōTERRA helps to implement social impact projects to improve basic quality of life and livelihoods in harvesting areas, as well as provide schools and other life skills training with the support of the dōTERRA Healing Hands Foundation.

The dōTERRA Healing Hands Foundation (HHF) has assisted the efforts of leaders from multiple clans and patrilineal groups from Uurwayne, Somaliland, who united with the goal to provide education for their children. HHF donated funds towards the construction of a school for boys and girls, ages seven through 12, with classes for older children in the evening. An additional four-classroom school was built to help 100 more students from other areas have access to education.

A severe drought in 2017 left more than six million Somalians—half the country's population—devastated due to dying livestock and failing crops. dōTERRA promptly responded to the crisis by donating over \$1.5 million in emergency drought relief funds to support 4,000 families in 32 of the most severely impacted villages. Furthermore, two schools that dōTERRA Healing Hands Foundation

had previously built served as drought relief centers for these communities during the crisis.

The dōTERRA Healing Hands Foundation and its local partners have recently committed more than \$4 million to establish the Sanaag Specialty Hospital, a non-profit regional hospital located in Erigavo, and other education and humanitarian initiatives. This was in response to the critical health care needs in Sanaag, Somaliland's primary Frankincense harvesting region. The first phase of the hospital, a 45-bed facility, is scheduled to open in early 2020. It will include Accident & Emergency, OPD, Diagnostics, Maternity and Pediatric Departments. Given access to professional healthcare is not available in this area, many locals are forced to travel far distances or forgo medical help all together. This Hospital will be the first functioning health care provider of its kind, providing access to life-saving services to tens of thousands of people living and working in the heart of Somaliland's resin harvesting area.

The dōTERRA Healing Hands Foundation is also actively supporting and funding clean water initiatives in Ethiopian harvesting areas, which has been an urgent need for these harvesting communities.

[Click here to learn more about our Frankincense sourcing efforts](#)

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pursue what's **pure**

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FOUNDATION™

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