

VICTOR'S LAVENDER

Expert supplies greenhouses worldwide

By **DIANNA TROYER**
For the Capital Press

SEQUIM, Wash. — Victor Gonzalez has no trade secrets about growing lavender, his life's mission.

Nicknamed the “Grandfather of Lavender,” Gonzalez raises lavender near Sequim, Wash., on the Olympic Peninsula in an unusual microclimate.

A wholesale producer, he and his staff propagate 500,000 seedlings of 100 lavender varieties to supply an increasing demand from greenhouses worldwide.

“I love to grow lavender and help others so they won't have the failures I had in the beginning,” said Gonzalez, 52, a U.S. Agency for International Development volunteer with nearly three decades of lavender expertise.

“That's who I am,” he said. “Having a giving attitude has taken me to Latin America, North Africa, and the Middle East to offer farmers advice. It's working for me. I will keep it that way.”

He teaches classes about raising the fragrant shrub, has contributed to a book, does consulting, and launched a website, victorslavender.com with instructional DVDs about propagating and planting the fragrant shrub.

For centuries worldwide, lavender has been prized for cooking, floral arrangements, its calming aroma, and as an ingredient in health and beauty products. Studies suggest lavender benefits those with depression, insomnia and anxiety, and that its oil has antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties.

A hardy, pest-resistant perennial shrub, lavender requires minimal watering and fertilization. It thrives in full sun and well-drained soil.

To share his love of lavender, Gonzalez's



Victor's Lavender

Victor Gonzalez with his lavender crop on his small farm near Sequim, Wash. He propagates 500,000 seedlings of 100 lavender varieties to supply the growing demand from greenhouses worldwide.

farm includes greenhouses, fields with a U-cut section, and a retail store with health and beauty products made by his wife, Maribel.

Gonzalez cultivates two acres and leases two acres. He also oversees four greenhouses on his farm and leases another three around town.

“The greenhouses are the heart of my farm,” he said. “We're known in the industry for offering quality plants and customer service — the whole package.”

Gonzalez learned to grow lavender in the mid-1990s, when the owner of a farm where he worked near Sequim wanted to try a new crop and asked him to raise lavender.

Having never grown it, he followed advice in a book and watched the plants die. In hindsight, he applied too much water and fertilizer.

“I decided to raise it based on my knowledge of soil types and growing crops in my family's farm in Mexico,” he said.

Don't Miss Another Issue!



Capital Press

EMPOWERING PRODUCERS OF FOOD & FIBER

- In-Depth Ag News
- Ag Success Stories
- Full Website Access
- Innovations & Regulations
- Classified Ads & Auctions
- E-edition, Apps, & Newsletters

1-Year Subscription for only \$39



Subscribe Today!

Pay online using promo code TRUST
800-882-6789 • CapitalPress.com

WATER MASTER SERIES AND EVERGREEN



SUPERIOR SERVICE & DESIGN

- All your needs for irrigation parts service
- We build custom equipment for your special needs.
- Hose replacements & fusion repairs
- Transport Tanks • Rental Returns & Used Equipment
- Structural and steel available for purchase.

Truck Equipment VALLEY WORKMAN

- Full Service • Alterations • Dump bodies
- Hoists • Farmbeds • Flatbeds



VALLEY FAB
CORP

10910 Portland Rd. NE • Brooks, OR
Call: 503-792-3739 • Fax: 503-792-3738

5272451-1