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Jekka Grows Native for the 'Power of Plants'

Organic herb farmer, Jekka McVicar, celebrates the 'Power of Plants' with a floral exhibit of medicinal herbs in the Grand Floral Pavilion at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2009. The display is double the size of previous exhibits, with twice as many organic herbs on show, many of which are native to the UK. A rill, which runs through the centre of the display, bordered with Angelica, under planted with Valerian and Celery leaf. It will be edged with Foxgloves, then leading into Woad, Poppies, Milk thistle and Caraway.



Jekka McVicar, 'Growing Native' for the Chelsea Flower Show

The novice gardener might perceive some of the herbs exhibited as mere weeds. Jekka, with 61 RHS gold medals under her belt (13 of those from the Chelsea Flower Show), is keen to illustrate their medicinal strength, and their beauty, thereby proving their rightful place in the organic herb garden. They can be found throughout the British Isles, and epitomise the 'Power of Plants', including:

Dandelion, *Taraxacum officinale* agg: a bitter tonic that is useful in the treatment of the stomach, liver, gall bladder and rheumatic complaints.

Stinging Nettle, *Urtica dioica*: the leaves are a nutritional supplement, rich in minerals and vitamins. Both roots and leaves are used to treat urinary and kidney complaints.

Jekka's inspiration for the exhibit came two years ago from a quotation she discovered whilst on tour as a guest of the Herb Society of South Africa:

Believe in Medicinals

2000 BC 'Here eat this root'

1000 AD 'That root is heathen, here say this prayer'

1850 AD 'That prayer is superstition, here drink this potion'

1940 AD 'That potion is snake oil, here swallow this pill'

1980 AD 'That pill is ineffective, here take this antibiotic'

2000 AD 'That antibiotic is artificial, here eat this root'.

Anonymous

Jekka's promotion of native herbs compliments the RHS 'Best of British Horticulture' theme in the Grand Floral Pavilion this year. Jekka's Herb Farm will be launching their brand new 'Grow Native' herb seed collection at the

show, which comprises 7 seed varieties, all of which are native to the UK: Caraway, Celery Leaf, Field Poppy, Foxglove, Milk Thistle, Valerian, and Woad.

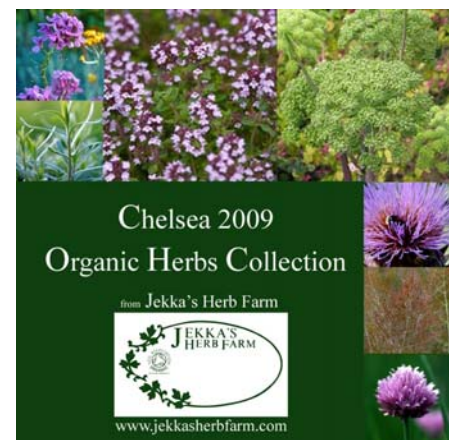


'Grow Native'
Herb Seed Collection

"Native herbs are amongst the easiest to grow, because they're used to our climate." Jekka explains, "What's more, they encourage our native bumble bees into the garden, especially if you grow organically. I want to prove that herbs are beneficial both to the gardener and the garden. Simply, they're the most useful plants that you can grow easily in a small space."

Jekka's Herb Farm are also offering a solution to Chelsea visitors who are sufficiently inspired by Jekka's herb display to want to start their own herb garden, but don't want to be laden down with plants whilst enjoying the show. Jekka's Chelsea Herbs Collection is a limited edition (50 only) of 8 organically grown herbs in 1 litre pots, comprising:

<i>Angelica archangelica</i>	Angelica
<i>Foeniculum vulgare 'Purpureum'</i>	Bronze Fennel
<i>Cynara cardunculus AGM</i>	Cardoon
<i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>	Chives
<i>Artemisia dracunculus</i>	French Tarragon
<i>Thymus 'Jekka'</i>	Jekka's Thyme
<i>Thymus citriodorus</i>	Lemon Thyme
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	Sweet Rocket



Organic Herbs Collection

Visitors can order the collection at the show, to have it delivered to their door after the show is over.

Jekka will be giving a talk at Chelsea on "Medicinal and Native Herbs" on Friday 22nd at the show, in the talks tent.

For further information, hi-res images of Jekka and/or herbs, please contact

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