



# BCAOA

British Columbia Alliance Of Aromatherapy

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## Award Of Excellence – 2009

*The British Columbia Alliance Of Aromatherapy has accepted the nomination put forward for **Kent Goodwin McKay** for his work and dedication in the field of Aromatherapy. The announcement was made at the BCAOA Annual General Meeting June 16, 2009.*

Dear BCAOA

Re: Achievement of Excellence Award

I had the pleasure of meeting Kent when he visited my aromatherapy class at Healing Scents Holistic Clinic in 2004. He came armed with not only precious essential oils but a passion and enthusiasm that was infectious. One could not help but be swept up in his vision of organic and sustainable aromatic oil production right here in our own backyard.

Since purchasing the small hobby farm in Cobble Hill, Kent has turned the heads of his neighboring farmers in the Cowichan Valley with his innovative use of the land. In a relatively short period of time, Kent has turned the farm into a viable aromatic farm that visitors gravitate to and locals are inspired to emulate.

I am sure that Kent will continue to be a good will ambassador for aromatherapy in the years to come as he carries with him that same curiosity and passion that I was witness to five years ago in my class.

Respectfully,  
Charlene Haley RA EOT  
Director  
Aromatic Farm Co-op

Dear BCAA,  
Re: Achievement of Excellence Award

Please accept this nomination package for Kent Goodwin McKay to recognize his invaluable contribution to the field of aromatherapy. I am delighted to have the opportunity to nominate Kent for this BCAA Award – I feel that opportunities such as this award have such a high value in honoring the commitment that individuals give to the field of aromatherapy in British Columbia. Recognition is an important part of giving back to leaders, who champion projects that we all benefit from.

Kent's contribution to the field of aromatherapy is truly unique in its nature. Over the past 10 years, he has reached out to hundreds of aromatherapists to raise awareness of the interconnection between farming and those little 5 ml bottles of essences that we rely on in our practices. There has been such a vast disconnect in the market place for consumers, most people have no idea how the plants were grown, whether or not the farmers and harvesters were paid a fair wage and even if the plants were cultivated with good environmental practices. By talking with aromatherapy students and writing articles for aromatherapy journals, Kent brings forward important issues in a positive way and presents information to help us make informed choices as practitioners.

Kent is truly committed to educating the aromatherapy community to the benefits of purchasing organic, biodynamic and fair trade oils. He has been distilling in Costa Rica for over 10 years, where he works with organic farmers to grow aromatic crops. He has mentored locals to follow permaculture models and incorporate their local traditional knowledge. The results are vibrant energetic plants, high production yields and soil that has been revitalized and enriched. The farmers and their communities have realized additional income generated through the integration of aromatic crops into their existing farming systems.

Kent has been championing local essential oil production on Vancouver Island for over 10 years. This has proven to be one of his most challenging projects to date; a decade ago, he was way ahead of the curve and received little to no support from the agriculture and forestry communities. His persistence and commitment to the idea has not diminished and is now being realized through the Aromatic Farm Co-op.

In 2006 Kent and his wife, Marisa purchased a 5 acre farm in Cobble Hill, the land had been utilized for horses and depleted down to dust by over grazing. In the short period of 2.5 years, Kent has skillfully demonstrated the rehabilitation of a typical horse property and turned it into a productive aromatic farm called [Organic Fair Farm and Garden](#). This rehabilitative work has been instrumental to the progress of the Aromatic Farm Co-op, by demonstrating to other hobby farmers in the Cowichan Valley the potential for aromatic farming for organic essential oil production.

Kent's level of expertise in the full cycle of organic essential oil production is second to none in British Columbia. He has carved out this niche through years of distillation and experimentation, building and designing stills based on the Denny design, getting his

hands dirty farming and harvesting the old fashioned way and traveling the world to share information with others in the industry.

Kent's dedication to organic farming and cultivating aromatic plants has provided aromatherapists with oils that are high in vital energy and life force. He grows aromatic plants and distills artisan organic oils specifically with therapeutic aromatherapy in mind, from seed selection, to harvesting and distilling – it's all done with the intent to produce the most potent healing oils that are free from adulteration. Kent works directly with Organic and Biodynamic certified farms in Costa Rica, Canada and the Pacific Northwest.

We had a very successful co-op AGM on April 18th, where Kent spent the afternoon educating local aromatherapists and farmers about aromatic farming and steam distillation, he delivered his Distillation 101 presentation with expert knowledge and an ease that engaged the group for hours - over 40 continuing educational credits were issued to local RA's by the end of the day. The Aromatic Farm Co-operative aims to develop a distillation apprenticeship program, with Kent's support and guidance; collectively our goal is to share knowledge and build capacity for local essential oil production.

I was just up at Kent's farm yesterday to drop off 300 lbs. of Sitka Spruce boughs for him to distill. When we arrived, I was completely blown away with the amount of production that Kent had realized in a short span of 5 days; he had taken down over a dozen huge Douglas Fir trees on the south side of his property to open it up better for his catnip and lavender plants. He was averaging 6 distillations a day and had utilized all of the branches from the felled trees... nothing went to waste!

Kent is truly an inspiration with his drive and energy to make distillation a reality on Vancouver Island – this is a man, who is following his path and sharing the therapeutic bounty with the Aromatherapists of British Columbia.

Thank you for this unique opportunity to recognize Kent Goodwin McKay for his past, present and future contributions to aromatic farming and local essential oil production.

Yours truly,  
Holly Caine  
Aromatic Farm Co-operative

Dear BCAOA,

Re: Achievement of Excellence Award: Kent Goodwin McKay

This letter is written in support of the nomination of Kent Goodwin McKay for an Achievement of Excellence Award from the BCAOA. Kent is currently a Director of the Aromatic Farm Co-op in the capacity of a distiller member, as he owns and operates a small farm in the Cowichan Valley, where he produces and retails locally grown organic produce, a range of essential oils, and food items (most noticeably, chocolate infused with essential oils!).

Kent is a champion of organic essential oil production, and an ambassador to the public, raising awareness and providing an example for just what is possible to produce from a small-scale farm. He continues to work as an advocate for sustainable farming, and puts this to practice in Costa Rica, where he encourages local farmers to use sustainable farming practices in the production of the crops for his essential oil distilling operations.

Frequently when one has a passion, they will work selflessly in the pursuit of this end, often without the recognition or encouragement from the greater community. This award would be significant recognition by his peers, acknowledging how much he has dedicated and contributed towards his efforts, and the efforts of all Aromatherapists in the use of locally produced, organic essential oils.

Sincerely,  
Ellen Coburn