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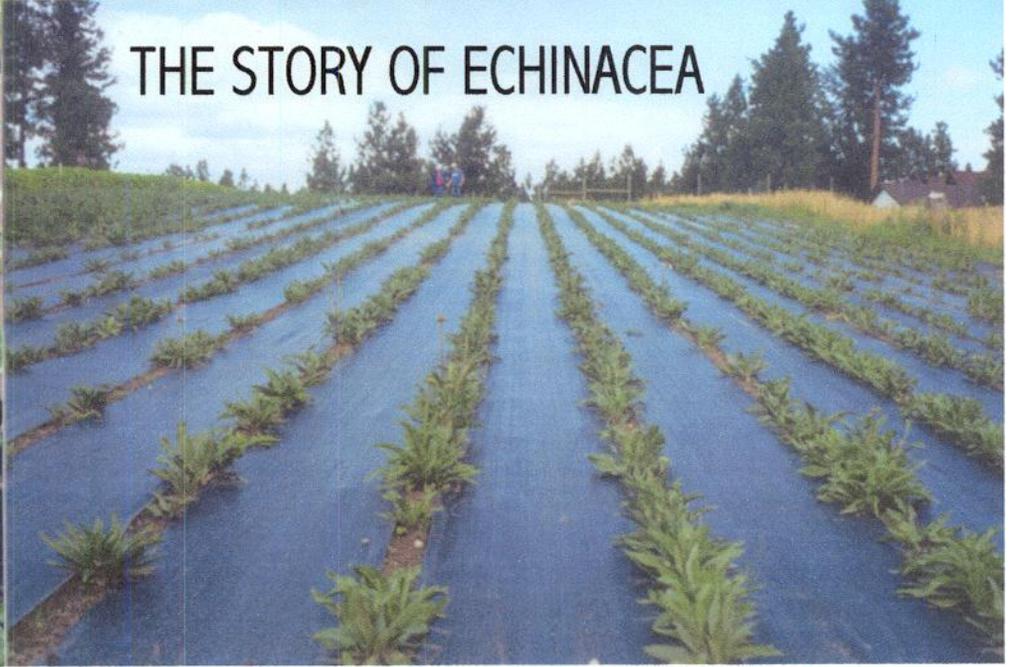
Note to reader: Complete Echinacea Feasibility Study and Growers Guide available from Emery Greenwood, Inc.

Echinacea Feasibility Study and Growers Guide

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THE STORY OF ECHINACEA

**ECHINACEA (Coneflower) FEASIBILITY STUDY
And
GROWERS GUIDE**

prepared for

WISCONSIN FARMERS AND GROWERS

With the support of the

**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION (DATCP)**

by

**Drs. J. Robert and Jeanne Rowley Burull
(Officers)**

of

EMERY GREENWOOD, INC.

NOVEMBER 1999

This document represents a comprehensive compilation of diverse information from a wide variety of publications and other sources. Some source content is contradictory to other source material, but in all cases represents grower-specialist-researcher's own experience and/or experiments and field trials with herbs and Echinacea in particular.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the supervision of and with an ADD Grant from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DA TCP) -- Marketing Division (Agriculture Diversity Development [ADD]).

This study was conducted from July 1998 through November 1999. The Study's basic objectives were (1) to develop an objective, valid, and credible study regarding Echinacea's "growth viability" and "financial feasibility" for Wisconsin farmers and growers; (2) to write an "Echinacea Production Handbook" for farmers and growers including (a) general product description, (b) environmental requirements, (c) seed stock sources, (d) recommended practices, equipment, and facilities, (e) market and manufacturers availability, (f) actual and estimated cost and time profiles for Echinacea production, and (g) insightful testimony and personal growing accounts from experienced growers; and (3) to establish and describe criteria for developing actual test sites for interested growers.

Information and data on all phases of Echinacea were gathered by the Burull's through review of literature, from reports and data developed by research and field trials from such sources as Kansas State University, South Dakota State University, ATTRA (a national sustainable agriculture information center funded by the USDA's Rural Business - Cooperative Service), from Journals such as "The Protocol Journal of Botanical Medicine," "The American Journal of Natural Medicine," "Horticulture Science Journals," and "The Herb Research Foundation," in Boulder, Colorado, and from grower testimonials ranging from experienced producers such as Nick Morcinek, who since 1979 has operated an organic herb farm and herbal medicine manufacturing business in Southern Ontario, to the "Tuscany" farms in southern British Columbia, veteran growers such as the Schimpfs and Alsagers in central British Columbia, to former marketing nwmgers of the Lake Trout Farms in Washington State, and an interview with Iowa grower LeRoy Ballard.

From this broad research including a review and analysis of Wisconsin's soil seasonal, and environmental characteristics, we have concluded that Wisconsin with its sizeable farming and rural population, its large cadre of greenhouse and garden entrepreneurs, as well as a small but already developing herbal industry, has a strong, viable, and feasible base for developing both small and large commercial Echinacea enterprises.

A primary target for this Study was especially to help and encourage Wisconsin current and former tobacco farmers to switch from tobacco to Echinacea and/or other medicinal herbs as an alternative to their dwindling crop base and production. However, at this stage of early introduction, tobacco farmers surprisingly have not strongly responded to Echinacea or other herb possibilities as an alternative crop and revenue source--even though Echinacea's intensive production labor requirements and herb cropping are similar to those of raising and harvesting tobacco. Echinacea and herb's hard, often dirty and discouraging long work hours, investment (time-money) risk, the sometimes fickle market, are all similar to the "hearty character requirement for success found in tobacco raising--along with the cash crop incentives.

One reason for this reticence is perhaps that tobacco growers, for the most part, are part of an inherited generation evolution to the point of being a "cultural manifestation" - a hard to "get-away-from" vocational attitude. Consequently, for many tobacco farmers, apparently, changing from this familiar "cultural work" to an unknown, risky organic production experience is too much of a leap at this moment - without more evidence of growing success for them to actually see, evaluate, and follow. More importantly is lack of a guaranteed market to give potential growers the confidence to invest their time and money.

Some tobacco growers, however, have made a beginning. That start includes developing germination and "plug" facilities for starting a 1999 Echinacea crop, and planting their own beginning parcels, and selling the plugs. Non-tobacco growers, on the other hand, have shown a much more active interest and involvement in beginning Echinacea as a new "cash crop" as part of their full or part-time work. Wisconsin's current Echinacea and medicinal herb growers produce from a half acre to over 20-acre Echinacea parcels. The Madison Herbal Society members, as an example, demonstrate an active, vigorous interest in growing and selling unprocessed herbal products as well as "value-added" products such as "Echinacea extracts, Echinacea pills, and herbal teas.

Regardless of these efforts and examples, however, Wisconsin has not yet developed an impressive output of, or an effective marketing, promotional or educational component for accelerating its Echinacea and/or medicinal herb production, or for providing producers with encouraging local or global buyer availability. A vigorous interest apparently abounds for more herbal education, knowledge, and market. For example, Emery Greenwood, Inc.'s, officers(authors), its staff, with generous help from DATCP'S, ADD Leadership and staff, provided an Echinacea Seminar (Spring of 1999) to provide that kind of information and instruction to an over-whelming, enthusiastic audience of actual and potential growers. To elevate Wisconsin's herbal identity, profitability quantity and quality levels, instruction, education, and promotion to potential buyers, buyer institutions, dealers, distributors, and growers, through cooperative development are needed.

Finally, from the many potential and actual Echinacea growers, four parties were asked and agreed to start their own test sites, using specific information from this study and the early Echinacea seminar presented in March, 1999. Data and perspective on those parties and sites will be described in this Study's content. Three are located in Southern Wisconsin, and one grower is located in Viroqua, although other new sites are sprinkled throughout Wisconsin.

Dr. J. Robert Burull
11/29/99

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

These authors acknowledge a number of sources that were instrumental in helping develop and complete this study. First, DATCP's ADD Director Erwin "Bud" Sholts provided his astute guidance and encouragement to the preliminary proposal brought to him. Mr. Sholts' immediate staff of Mike Bandli, Agricultural Marketing Consultant, and Theresa Boberg, Program Assistant, as always were and are competently and graciously helpful in providing service and suggestions to help develop and complete this work.

Tracey and Warren Schimpf, of Kelowna, British Columbia, Judy Alsager and Richard Keep and Judy's daughter Buffy Rivard of Cariboo Ginseng, Williams Lake, British Columbia were very generous with their knowledge through both written contributions and their time during our field visits to their herbal farms. Tracey Schimpf and Judy Alsager were founding members and are Board Directors of the British Columbia Herb Growers Association. Through them the B.C. Herb Association provided this study with an invaluable text from the Science Council of British Columbia. - Okanagan.

Far too many other people were involved to mention all who contributed to this study, but in its early development, including presenting materials to the "Echinacea Seminar," the following deserve recognition: Steve Bertjens, Director - SW Badger RC&D, Steve Banovetz, AGRICOLE, Director - Division of Native Plants, Barbara Birkinbine, Organic Specialist and Owner - OAK CAMP FARM, Barbara Letchworth, Director of Commodities, FRONTIER HERBS, Norway, Iowa. Karl Venner, tobacco farmer and entrepreneur from Viroqua started an Echinacea plug growing operation and in turn motivated several other area farmers to make a beginning planting of *Angustifolia* this year. Cheryl Eikland, Roy Marsden, Robert Stack, and Barbara Birkinbine volunteered to start test plots for themselves and to share their information with other growers. Others from Beehive Botanicals to Michael Langdon of COUNTRY TODAY, and to Dr. Herb Hopen, retired Emeritus Professor and former Chairman of the University of Wisconsin- Madison Horticultural Department, gave of their time and we give our heartfelt thanks for their input and advice.

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1. Some Principles about Financial Planning and Cooperatives" by J. Robert Burull Ph.D., at DATCP's Spring, 1999 Echinacea Seminar.
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Barbara Birkinbine-Oak Camp Herb Farm, Lodi, WI	3.0 Acres
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Cheryl Eikland, Rural Cambridge, WI	0.50 Acre
Robert Stack, Rural Viroqua, WI	0.50 Acre