



## **Adulteration and Contamination**

### **“Pure”**

In the US, the term "pure" has no legal meaning and is often applied to just about anything.

### **Synthetic Fragrances**

Certain oils do not exist in a natural state, or are very rare, and are only available as synthetic fragrances or “bouqueted” fragrances (combination of essential oils, absolutes, and synthetics). These include honeysuckle, linden, gardenia, frangipani.

### **Adulteration**

The more expensive an oil, the more risk of adulteration.

Some oils are highly adulterated, such as melissa (lemon balm), and sandalwood.

### **Chain of Supply**

The fragrance industry has many levels of buyers and suppliers. The more levels that are involved, the more risk of adulteration. Large volumes of oils are sold as “genuine” and “pure,” which are not. False advertising is rampant in the aromatherapy world. It is best to get oils directly from the distiller.

### **Pesticides**

Some pesticides are carried over in the extracting process, some are not. Expressed citrus oils contain pesticide residues.

### **Grades**

Lower grades of oils are frequently sold as higher. A good example is ylang ylang.

### **Extenders**

Many oils are “extended” using synthetic or natural solvents.

Expensive oils are frequently extended with jojoba.

Some oils are extended to make them more pourable, like benzoin; the solvent is frequently questionable.

### **Bulking**

The post-distillation combining of oils from one or more species.

Piling plants of the same species from different harvests into the still together. Dried plant material from different years may be bulked with fresh.

Bulking is done to make the product cheaper and/or to make it conform to some standard desirable to the fragrance or flavoring industries.

**Rectified or Redistilled:**

Oils that have had natural components removed from them: terpene-less oils, furocoumarin-free oils.

**Folded:**

Oils, (usually citrus) that have been redistilled a number of times to remove more of the monoterpenes (usually) to make the oil more desirable for the flavoring industry.

**Reconstituted:**

Oils that have had natural or synthetic chemical components added to them after distillation.