

# The Candle Making Manual

(First written in 1999 and updated through the years)

Written by Deborah Ward





## *A note from the author:*

"The reason I wrote the following manual is to share some of my past 12 years of candle making knowledge and business experience with any new candle maker out there who has been given no technical support from other companies he/she has contacted. When I started making candles in 1997, the candle industry was a huge secret and no one was willing to share information on how to make good candles. I wasted a bunch of money figuring out how to make the best candles. I wanted to be able to make and sell candles in order to help cover some of our household expenses. Needless to say, it cost me quite a bit of money figuring out how to make the finest candles, and I decided that the secrecy of the candle making industry needed to come to an end. In 1999, I wrote the first Candle Making Manual so that I could help people learn how to make good candles without spending a bunch of their hard-earned money. I knew there were other people out there like me who needed to make extra money to support their families. I became determined to help. In fact, **Nature's Garden was the very first company who provided candle makers with the help and knowledge they needed to make and market the finest candles.**

We take candle making extremely seriously at Nature's Garden. Each employee we hire agrees to adopt our C.A.R.E. Program: Customers Always Remember Excellence. We understand that our company is nothing without our loyal customers, and your happiness is our main goal. We fully train each and every employee at NG how to make and market candles so that any of our employees can answer your technical questions if you have any after reading the manual. We are the only company that offers a **Toll-Free H.U.G Line; HUG stands for Help U Grow. 1-866-647-2368.** We offer the HUG Line because we want you to know that you can call us anytime to receive HELP. Our technical support is the most comprehensive support in the industry because our primary goal at Nature's Garden is to **"Help our Customers Succeed".** This customer dedication has allowed NG to become one of the largest and most reputable suppliers on the web. We believe that **"Together, we can make things happen!"** Nature's Garden has become an innovation leader in the industry. Using our chemistry background, and working closely with numerous other chemists and professionals, you can feel confident that Nature's Garden is thoroughly educated on every product that we sell. We also work extremely hard researching market trends world-wide so that our customers are always a step-ahead of the competition. Nature's Garden has always been People-Driven.....not.....Profit-Driven. This attitude has allowed us to develop long-lasting relationships with **more than 80,000 customers.** I would like to wish you great success in your new candle making venture....**a venture that quickly turns into an addiction!"**

**Now you have no reason to waste your money experimenting!**





## *Supplies you will need for candle making:*

We will speak about each of these supplies in the following sections, but for right now you will at least have an idea of what type of supplies you will need to get started!

- [Wax](#) (either single pour or votive/mold wax)
- [Coloring](#) (you choose: color blocks, liquid dyes, powder dyes, color chips)
- [Additives](#) (such as vybar, petrolatum, etc)
- [Pouring pot](#)
- [Fragrance](#) (oil-based and designed for candle making)
- Heat source (stove, hot plate)
- Melting heat source (you choose: turkey roaster, presto pot, hot water heater)  
A turkey roaster that I am referring to is an electric unit with a heat control knob on it. It holds 25 lbs. of wax. Hamilton Beach sells these at stores like K Mart, and Ames.
- Stainless steel measuring cups and measuring spoons
- Stainless pitcher for transferring your melted wax from your roasters to your pouring pots on the stove
- Wooden spoons
- [Molds for molded candles](#)
- [Containers for single-pour candles](#)
- Pan at least 13 X 9 with 1/2" water in it
- [Wicks](#)
- Safety glasses
- [Candy thermometer](#)
- A room temperature environment of about 70 degrees
- Work clothes
- Floor mats or cardboard for your floors



## *Let's talk about the candle making ingredients!*



**WAX** - I list this one first because, in my opinion the type of wax that you use will determine the overall quality of the candle you make. In other words, if you try to use cheap wax ...you'll end up getting low-quality candles. One of the secrets to making high-quality candles is that you need to use a quality wax! One of the biggest misconceptions that many new candle makers have is, "The more fragrance you use...the stronger candles you will produce."

This belief is just not the case! If you think of wax as a sponge for a moment, and fragrance as water, you will understand why I say this.

When you pour water into a sponge, it fills up the pores in the sponge. The sponge will only hold so much water! When all of its pores are filled....the water starts leaking out of the sponge. The same thing happens with wax and fragrance; once all of the pores in the wax are filled with fragrance....the fragrance will settle out of the wax. This will leave you with wasted fragrance oil on the bottom of your pouring pot. We all know how expensive fragrance is.....why waste it? Also, you should never use anymore than 1.5 oz. fragrance per pound of wax because your candles could become a fire hazard. We have always used pre-blended waxes for our candle making. By this I mean that all of the candle additives are added to the wax by the wax manufacturer so that we don't have to bother with them.

However, if you add 1-2 oz. of Crisco shortening per pound of single pour paraffin wax, you will notice an increase in your scent-throw. My experience has shown that by the time you buy all of the ingredients you will need to make quality wax on your own, you will spend more money than if you bought the wax already blended for you....plus it saves time! When working with wax, pay close attention to the directions for use. Temperature plays a very important role in making quality candles. Make absolutely sure you never heat your wax to over 250 F. If your wax gets too hot, the molecules in the wax may begin to break down and the wax will take on a burnt smell. If this ever happens to you, the wax is ruined! You cannot simply add fragrance to cover up the smell.

Please Note: Nature's Garden, with the help of a chemist, has developed a wax we call JOYWAX . [JOYWAX](#) performs wonderfully without the addition of ANY additives or Crisco.



**1. Fragrance** - When making candles, you will want to use concentrated fragrance oils distinctly made for candle making. Never use alcohol based fragrance! There are fragrance companies out there that sell good fragrance.....but there are also fragrance companies that sell low-cost diluted fragrance. Now, when you locate a company that sells concentrated fragrance, you will only want to use 1 oz.- 1.5 oz. of fragrance per 1 lb. of wax. Considering that you have chosen to use quality wax and concentrated fragrance, you will not have to use any more than 1.5 oz. fragrance per 1 lb of wax! If you use more than this amount of fragrance, you will usually notice an "oil slick" on the bottom of your pouring pot, which means that you just wasted fragrance!

Nature's Garden Offers 100% Concentrated Fragrance Oils which were specifically formulated by a master perfumist for use in candle making....and many of these same oils can also be used for other applications such as: Gel Wax, Soy Wax, Bath-n-Body Products, and Soap. Nature's Garden sells our fragrances at wholesale prices, not retail. Natures Garden is able to sell our concentrated fragrance oils at great prices because we are one of the largest suppliers in the world and we have bulk buying power.

Consequently, we pass our savings along to you! Be aware that there are some companies who sell "Potpourri Fragrance Oils"- these oils may be lower priced, however, they are about 50% as concentrated as the Fragrance oils Nature's Garden carries. Potpourri fragrance oils contain a product called DPG (dipropylene glycol), which is used to dilute fragrances. Fragrance oils containing DPG will not burn correctly.



**A chemistry lesson on fragrance oils:** Essential oils are 100% all-natural plant- derived oils usually acquired through steam distillation. Essential oils were used by the first Egyptian perfumists to make their perfume oils (using a mortar and pestle to release the plant/flower oil). Essential oils are much more expensive than their chemically-engineered counterpart..... Fragrance Oils. Due to the extremely high prices of some essential oils (some as high as \$10,000 per oz.), perfumists began reproducing the aromas of these essential oils by using just the right combinations of more than 3,000 different aromatic chemicals. Aromatic chemicals are in the form of ketones and aldehydes, and every aromatic chemical is polar to some degree. This is why Nature's Garden does not make the claim-to-fame that any of our fragrance oils are NON-POLAR....because this is absolutely impossible for any perfumist to do! All fragrance oils have some degree of polarity to them. Some fragrance oils may be less polar than others, but they can never be completely Non-Polar. Gel wax requires fragrance oils which are less-polar (miscible in mineral oil) & have a flash point above 170F. Perfumists can make fragrances less-polar by using isopar solvents, but since all fragrances contain some degree of polar aromatic chemicals, it is still impossible to make them 100% non-polar. We have had customers ask why we charge the same amount for our regular fragrances as we do our fragrances that are found to be gel wax compatible. The reason for this is: Gel compatible fragrances do not cost any more to produce than regular candle fragrances. **Note: Since the induction of IFRA's 44<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Natures Garden does not test our fragrances for gel wax compatibility. Customers are responsible for testing fragrances for gel wax compatibility.**

There are a few companies who charge more for their Gel Safe fragrances due to creative marketing attempts, but chemistry does not justify this price increase. Nature's Garden Fragrance oils are a combination of aromatic chemicals and essential oils. When our perfumist creates a specific aroma, he mixes just the right combination of the required aromatic chemicals and essential oils. About 99% of Nature's Garden fragrance oils are designated "Body Safe" by our perfumist. All of the fragrances sold at Natures Garden meet the safety recommendations of RIFM and IFRA. For body safeness....refer to our fragrance description on our website next to the specific fragrance oil. Nature's Garden also provides MSDS (material safety data sheets) for all of our fragrances, waxes, and bath products. If you do not find a specific MSDS listed, please check back regularly for our updates. In 2009, we had all of our fragrances reviewed to meet the 44th IFRA Amendment requirements.

All of Natures Garden fragrance oils have an IFRA Compliance Certificate that is located on the bottom of each MSDS sheet. We go the extra mile to keep you well informed about what you are buying, and this is why all MSDS sheets and IFRA Compliance Certificates can be easily printed right from our website.



**1. Coloring** - There are several types of coloring that you may use for candle making. Each type has its pros and cons. My experience in candle making has concluded the following about each type of coloring.

**(a) Color Blocks** - Color blocks provide you with the richest and most cost-effective means of coloring your candles. Unfortunately, when you choose to use color blocks for candle making it is difficult to achieve color accuracy each and every time. This problem can be resolved by buying a gram scale and weighing your color.....but that takes a lot of time, TIME is MONEY. We use color blocks to make our dark colors only.

**(b) Liquid dye** - Liquid dye provides you with a solution to the color accuracy problem, but all liquid dye that I have ever had any experience with does have a slight chemical smell to it. Therefore, we do not use liquid dye when we need to produce rich colors. The rule of thumb that I have found to be helpful is: If the color you desire to make requires that you use more than 10 drops of liquid dye per 4 lbs. of wax, then don't use liquid dye! For some reason, anymore than 10 drops per 4 lbs. of wax will give your candles a slight chemical smell. Make 10 drops your cut-off line!

**(c) Color chips** - In my opinion, color chips are over-priced, and are not finely ground enough to resolve the color accuracy goal.....therefore, I do not suggest using them.

**(d) Crayons** - Using crayons to color your candles is not an option for producing high-quality candles! Crayons clog your wick and cause your candles to smoke....forget about using them!



**2. Candle additives** - Many candle makers use various candle additives in order to enhance the quality of the end-product. Although I do not suggest starting off adding these additives to preblended wax, I will discuss the properties of each of these additives so that you may decide whether you desire to use them in your candles. Batches of candle wax can vary, so you need to know how to adjust accordingly. You will notice that I do not mention stearin. That is because I feel that vybar works better with fewer side effects.

**(a) Vybar** - vybar is primarily used by candle makers to enhance the "scent throw" of their candles. Vybar makes the appearance of your candles more opaque, and will produce a marbeled look on the top of your container candles which looks really neat! Vybar actually increases the wax melt point and slightly hardens your wax consistency.

It is also important to know that when you add vybar to your wax, only use 1/4-1/2 tsp. per lb. of wax. Adding too much vybar to your wax will "bind" your fragrance! There are 2 types of vybar used in candlemaking: vybar 103 is used in votive and molded candles, and vybar 260 is used for single pour wax.

**(b) UV light protectors** - I would like to start by saying, "This stuff is expensive!". If your goal is to sell your products at wholesale to shops and stores, I would say you had better use this stuff in your candles! UV light protector helps your candles maintain their normal colors. Have you ever seen candles on the shelves at stores that were lighter on top than the rest of the candle? Sunlight fades candle color. Make sure that even if you use UV light protector in your candles that you tell the store owners not to place your candles in direct sunlight. The colors which are most likely to fade in the sun are Blue, Violet, Burgundy, and sometimes pink. We use only 1/4 tsp. UV light protector per 4 lbs. of wax. You really don't need to use much of this stuff to do the job.....but you won't want to when you are paying \$30/lb (price in 1999)! I would like to mention that if you find that your colors are still fading when you are using the UV light Protector, the fading may be caused by the actual color of your fragrance. I remember when we first started making candles and our dark blue blueberry cobbler kept turning olive color on top. We tried UV light protector and it still faded! Finally, we came to the conclusion that it was the dark yellow color of the fragrance that was causing this discoloration to occur. We now have our blueberry cobbler formulated so that it is not so yellow! Problem was taken care of!

**(c) Petrolatum** - Say you buy wax that just won't cling to the sides of your jars.....add some petrolatum to your wax! You would add 1/4 cup petrolatum per 4 lbs. of wax. Petrolatum helps to increase the number of pores in your wax.....thus allowing the wax to absorb more fragrance! The downside of using petrolatum in your wax is that your candle will not burn as clean....sometimes even smoking!

**(d) Crisco Shortening**- We were the first company who told our customers to add Crisco shortening to their paraffin blend waxes in order to increase scent throw. In response to this, we were ridiculed and mocked on message boards across the web. I remember having countless discussions with wax manufacturers about the benefits of using Crisco in their paraffin blend waxes. They did not listen until about 5 years later. Crisco shortening helps to decrease wet spots, increases your melt pool, absorbs fragrance, and helps to decrease the likelihood of your fragrance oil sitting on the bottom of your pouring pots. We use 1-2 oz. of Crisco shortening per pound of wax. You will probably read conflicting opinions on using Crisco in your candles; however, if it had been such a bad idea, then wax manufacturers would not now be making wax out of soy. Crisco is soy. Use your own judgment on this one!

**3. Wicks-** I want you to realize that this entire manual is written according to my own experience making candles. Therefore, based on what I have encountered, I have formed my own opinions on several candle making topics. When it comes to wicks.....I definitely have a preference! Now, I am sure you have seen it smeared all over the TV about the study that was done on candle wicks containing lead content. The media did an absolute terrible job covering this issue! The fact of the matter is that almost 100% of the candle wicks that did contain lead content were from outside the USA. Do you have any idea how many candle makers in the USA have had to explain to their customers that the wicks used to make their candles contain less lead than we have in our drinking water supply? The fact of the matter is that I personally don't even know of a single wick manufacturer in the US that even makes lead-core wicks! On the other hand, these wick manufacturers do sell tons of zinc-core wicks.....the best wicks that you can use for candle making! When customers see the metal inside the wick....they "freak" out! Just explain to your customers that zinc is not lead. About wicks.....I definitely prefer zinc-core wicks to cotton or any other kind of wicks on the market. Cotton wicks smoke and do not allow for a nice hot burn. Zinc-core wicks burn hotter and cleaner, and the best thing about zinc-core wicks is that they allow the customer to enjoy the entire candle....no waste...nothing left in the container!

Too many times I have seen candles that burn right down the middle, leaving about 1/2" of the wax on the sides of the container. I suggest trying zinc-core wicks and I also suggest that you are not stingy on the number of wicks that you put in your containers! We use (2) 5" wicks in our 16 oz. apothecary jars. Most candle companies only use one. If you want your customers to be repeat customers, you want to make sure that the only thing left in the container are wick tabs! Below you will find specific containers or molds and the number and size of wicks that we use in our candles. This will save you so much time because you will not have to experiment with wick size on your own! If you use these recommendations, your candles will burn slowly and evenly without leaving any candle residue on the sides of the container. I should also mention that we use pretabbed, prewaxed wicks. Using this type of zinc-core wick will allow you to do away with wick stickums and centering devices for your votives. All you do with these kinds of wicks is: straighten the wick...and stick it where you want it! Simple! Note: Update on Deborah's Wick preferences: Since the time that this candle manual was written, new wicks, called CD wicks, hit the market. I think that CD wicks burn even hotter than zinc core wicking, but either type of wick is great to use.



## Wick Size & Number

Candle Container	Size Wick	#
28 oz. apothecary jar	6" 44-28-18Z	2
16 oz. apothecary jar	5" 51-32-18Z	2
10 oz. Clear apothecary	2 1/2" 44-28-18Z	2
10 oz. Frosted apothecary	2 1/2" 44-28-18Z	2
5 oz. apothecary	5" 51-32-18Z	1
Flowerpot	2 1/2" 44-28-18Z	1
1.5 oz. Hexagon	1 3/4" 44-20-18Z	1
4 oz. Hexagon	2 1/2" 44-28-18Z	1
9 oz. Hexagon	6" 44-28-18Z	1
4 oz. Swivel Jar	2 1/2" 44-28-18Z	1
Country Jar (4 oz.)	2 1/2" 44-28-18Z	1
8 oz. Cylinder	6" 44-28-18Z	1
Votives (15 hour)	2 1/2" 44-28-18Z	1

## Candle Wick Chart

Wick suggestions are for fragrance oils. Customers who use 100% essential oils will have to perform your own wick testing.

Below you will find the various types of wicks Natures Garden offers. Use this guide when determining which wick to use for your projects. This guide should not be considered a substitute for testing.



Zinc-core wicking	Most popular wicking, Used in all applications
CD flat braided coreless wicking	Almost self-trimming, Very popular in soy/veggie waxes
HTP all cotton braided	Very popular wicking in soy/veggie waxes.
Hemp core wicking	All natural, Hot burn, Very popular in soy/veggie waxes

Diameter/Size of Candle	Wick Suggestion
<b>Tea Lights</b>	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (44-20-18) zinc core wick
<b>Votives &amp; Containers with 1"-2" diameter</b>	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (44-28-18) zinc 6" (44-28-18) zinc 6" (44-24-18) zinc 6" CD 5 HTP 31 (2.5") Hemp (838) 6"
<b>Pillars &amp; Containers with 2" – 3" diameter</b>	Hemp (1400) 6" 6" (51-32-18) zinc 6" (44-28-18) zinc HTP 52 (4") HTP 73 (6") 6" CD 7 6" CD 10
<b>Pillars &amp; Containers with 3" -3.5" diameter</b>	6" CD 12 6" Extra Large (62-52-18) zinc Hemp (60048) 6" HTP 73 (6") HTP 83 (6")
<b>Pillars &amp; Containers with 3.5" or more diameter (larger diameter suggestions specified)</b>	Hemp (60048) 6" 6" Extra Large (62-52-18) zinc HTP 104 (6") for 4" diameter candles HTP 1212 (6") for 4.5" diameter candles CD 12 for 3.5" diameter candles, CD 14 for 4" diameter candles, CD 16 for 4.25" diameter candles, CD 18 for 4.5" diameter candles, CD 20 for 5" diameter candles, CD 22 for 5.5" diameter candles.



## *Let's Talk About Candle making Equipment!*

**1. Heat sources** - I am only going to talk about the equipment that you will need to make hand-poured candles. Although at one time we did consider automating our candle making process, I chose against that idea because I am 100% convinced that automation decreases the quality of your end product. The reason for this has everything in the world to do with the heat source that you are using and how long your fragranced wax is in contact with your heat source.

**(a) Turkey roasters** - We use these turkey roasters for melting our slabs of wax. Each turkey roaster holds approximately 20-25 lbs. of wax. Turkey roasters cost \$70-\$100 each (price in 1999), and you can find them at Ames, Walmart, etc. Although you will find sophisticated wax melters on the market that are capable of melting 100+ lbs. of wax at a time, these units tend to be rather pricey. When using turkey roasters, you will want to make sure that the area below the roaster pan has about 1/4" of water in it. Your wax will not melt properly without the water in this area and you will burn up your turkey roaster without it....so make sure you have water in this area. However, do not use more than 1/4" of water in this area or you will have water bubbling out all over your surrounding work area. When I train new employees I always ask them, "What is wax's worst enemy?" Water is the answer! If you happen to get water in your wax, you will get holes in your candles....so be very careful! We keep our turkey roasters set at 175. We also use separate turkey roasters for single pour and votive/mold wax. It is pertinent that you keep votive/mold wax out of your single pour wax or your single pour wax will require a second pour. However, if you happen to get a small amount of single pour wax in your votive/mold wax, you should not notice any major problems. Did you know that when wax is slabbed, it is cooled using cold water? Sometimes pockets of this water can get trapped in your wax. If you ever find this to be the case, put your wax melter on low, and allow the water to evaporate out of the wax; keeping the lid off of your melter while you do this.

**(b) Stove or hot plate** - You will need another heat source in addition to the turkey roasters. The only thing we ever place in our turkey roasters is wax....no color...no additives...no fragrance. You will need this additional heat source for maintaining your pouring temperature while you are adding color, additives, and fragrance to your wax. Take a 13 X 9 cake pan and place 1/2" of water in the bottom of it so that you simulate the same type of double broiler affect that you have with the turkey roasters. This heat source should be set at low to medium heat settings depending on the quality of heat source that you are using. It is absolutely ideal to use a stove for this second heat source so that you have an oven available for heating your containers. If your containers are too cool, you will need to warm your containers in the oven before you pour wax into them, otherwise your wax will cool too quickly and you will notice jump lines in your candles.



**2. Pouring pots** - When we started making candles, we actually used coffee cans instead of pouring pots. If you decide to use coffee cans...they work just fine! Make sure that you bend the lip of the can so that you can easily pour your wax out of the coffee can. You will also want to have plenty of safety gloves or pot holders on hand for handling the hot coffee cans. We actually have a specific pouring pot for each fragrance that we make so that candle fragrances are not mixed together and so that color accuracy is not jeopardized. You do not have to go to these extremes, but make sure that you have as many pouring pots as you do colors. You will want to keep the bottoms of your pouring pots as clean as possible because it may cause the hot water in the pan to splatter all over you.....and I'll tell you....OUCH that hurts! This is also why I list safety glasses in the list of things you will need to make candles. UPDATE NOTE: Coffee producers are now packaging coffee in plastic containers instead of the metal containers we used to use. Do not use plastic coffee containers for melting your wax; the containers themselves will melt.



**3. Candy thermometer**- The temperature that you pour your candles is very important! In a following section I will be covering candlemaking troubleshooting. Many of the problems that you will encounter with candlemaking are related to the temperature of your wax. Like I mentioned previously, for best results you will want to pour your single pour wax at 145-150, and your votive/mold wax at 160-165.

**4. Molds** - I have read about people using dixie cups to make their votives, but I have never considered using them! Votive molds cost roughly .75- \$1 each (price in 1999)....and you can use them forever! I just think that in the long run the price of the dixie cups would cost you more money than buying the molds. Make sure that before you pour wax into your molds that they are at room temperature. Pouring hot wax into molds that are too cool will create problems for you...more about that later. When you buy your molds you will receive them stacked together. Whatever you do..... make sure that you have heavy-duty gloves on when trying to get these molds apart! The edges of metal votive molds are razor sharp! To keep your metal candle molds clean, rub your mold with a small amount of shortening, place upside down at 150 degrees in oven for 10-15 minutes. Take out of oven and wipe clean. Never clean your metal molds with water.

**5. A room temperature work environment**- I realize that listing this as something that you will need for candlemaking may sound kind of ridiculous, but the importance of a favorable work environment temperature cannot be over emphasized! Try to work in an area that is at least 70 degrees. Although you will want to make sure that you have proper ventilation, make sure that you do not have any drafts. Cool work environments cause your candles to set up too rapidly....causing a number of problems.

**6. Old Clothes to work in** - Make sure that you are not wearing your Sunday's best while making candles. No matter how neat you may think you are, you will get color and wax all over you!

**7. Floor mats or cardboard on your floors** - Just thought I should mention this one because spilled fragrance can create an "Ice arena affect". I have had a number of incidences myself that could have been avoided if cardboard would have been on the floor.

**8. Stainless steel measuring cups and measuring spoons**- Did you ever learn in chemistry class about "Like dissolves like"? Well, when you measure out your fragrances make sure that you never use plastic measuring cups or spoons. The fragrance oils will dissolve your cups! Stainless steel is the way to go!

## *Are You Ready to Make Candles?*

**Here we go!**



How to Make High-Quality Candles (the secrets that have made us successful!) Step by step instructions. If you follow these instructions exactly, you will produce the Best-smelling, longest-lasting candles imaginable!

**1. Check your turkey roasters** to make sure that you have 1/4" of water in the bottom of them. Set them to 175 and add 2 slabs of wax. You will have to break the slabs in half so that they will fit in the roasters. The wax will take 1-2 hrs. to melt. In the mean time.....

**2. Put 1/2" of water in your 13 X 9 pan on the stove.** Get your pouring pots, color, additives, fragrance, containers, molds, and wicks ready for the candle making process. In a following section I will be covering how to set up your work area so that you can save time.

**3.** Once your wax is melted, transfer about 4 lbs. of the wax to each pouring pot on your stove. Make sure that your stove is on low-medium settings. Once you have 4 lbs. of wax in your pouring pots, take a sharp knife and make a cut mark on the inside of your pouring pot showing you for future reference where your fill line is. This will help you achieve color accuracy each time you make a certain fragrance.

**4. Decide what fragrance you will be working with** and your desired color for that specific fragrance. In the product description area of each fragrance, we list coloring suggestions for each fragrance we carry. These are just suggestions; feel free to come up with your own coloring ideas. Once you decide the right color for each fragrance, it is really beneficial to place a label on the outside of your pouring pots that has the fragrance name and color combinations written on it.

**Example:** Grandma's Kitchen- 2 drops yellow. When your company grows enough to hire employees, you will thank me for this! When you have employees, it is detrimental that you make the candle making process as simple and organized as possible! More on that later!

**5. Add your color and additives to your pouring pots.** Allow the color and additives to properly dissolve. While these ingredients are dissolving, set up your molds, containers. Place your containers or molds at the edge of your counter or work bench. When pouring your candles you will always want to pour the candles on the outside edge first. Avoid pouring candles behind your first row because your pouring pot has water and colored wax on the bottom of it and it may drip onto your candles.

**6. Check your wax temperature.** We are going to talk about container candles first, so make sure your pouring temperature is 145-150. Once you get the hang of all of this, you won't even have to check your temperature...you will just know when it the right temperature!

**7.** I have read message boards that suggest that you measure your fragrance by weight. I can tell you, you don't have to do that! We never have and never will. Measure your fragrance using your measuring cup. If you are using the suggested 4 lbs. of wax in your pouring pots, all you have to do is fill up a 1/2 cup measuring cup and pour your fragrance into your wax mixture. It is really that easy! But, if you want to waste your time weighing everything out.....remember what I have said....TIME IS MONEY! Now, dump your fragrance in your wax mixture, give it a good stir, and pour it right away! Make sure that when you hire employees that you tell them not to add fragrance to the wax mixture until they are ready to pour! If you allow fragrance to be in contact with your heat source for any length of time, the fragrance will begin to evaporate. That is why I mentioned earlier that automation decreases your candle quality. The problem is that you cannot simply fix this problem by adding more fragrance because.....remember the analogy of the sponge and water? Once your wax pores are filled....the extra fragrance you add will only settle out of the wax.

**8. Begin filling your containers.** You will have to do a little bit of experimenting here to see how full your containers should be. I say this because when you fill apothecary jars you only want to fill the container to the point where the sides of the jar start to curve in. If you fill the apothecary jars all the way up to the neck area of the jar, you may notice some sinkage in your candle or sometimes even holes.

**9.** Wicking candles is much easier when you use the pretabbed prewaxed zinc core wicks. Allow your candles to cool a little while until you see that the bottom of the container has about 1" of candle setting up. Now, straighten your wicks, and place them in the candle....properly spaced apart.

We use (2) 5" wicks in our 16 oz. apothecary. When making candles that contain more than 1 wick, make sure that the wicks are not too close to the sides of the container. This will increase the amount of soot on the sides of the candle.....and customers do not like that! Of course if you are making candles that are smaller than the 16 oz. apothecary jar, you will not want to wait until 1" of the candle has set up before you wick. In the case of 3 oz. flowerpots, for example, you will want to start wicking your containers once you see about 1/4" of the candle setting up. If you try to wick your candles too soon, your wicks will move position and will not be properly spaced apart. If you wick your candles too late, your wicks will not migrate to the bottom of the container. I guess this part is a little tricky....but you can do it! We have also found that you can straighten your wicks by using those black combs the barber hands out to men. Lay the comb across the top of the container or mold, and center your wick using the teeth of the comb. Now that is an idea you have never heard before!

**10. Cooling your candles** - For the best results, allow your candles to cool at room temperature without any drafts. Something that I just learned the other day is that if you place your containers back into their box after they have set up enough to move them, and allow them to cool the rest of the way in their boxes, you will achieve the best looking candles. By this I mean that this procedure will reduce the occurrence of jump-lines and bubbles in your candles. If your work environment temperature is cooler than the recommended room temperature, I would suggest you use this idea to help control any cooling problems that you may encounter.

**11. Do not place lids on your apothecary jars** until the candles have had a chance to set up at least 3 hours. Putting the lid on too quickly will cause condensation on the glass lid of your container.....not pretty!

## *Making Mold/Votive Candles*



**1.** Prepare your wax, color, and fragrance the same way as mentioned above, but make sure that if you add vybar to your wax that you use the vybar 103 specifically made for molded candles , and make sure that you use wax that is designed for mold/votive candles. However, you never want to use petrolatum or Crisco in any molded candles because you will not be able to get your candles out of their molds!

**2.** Line up your molds on the edge of your counter. Once again, pour the molds in the front first, wick them when you see about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " of wax setting up on the bottom of the mold, and allow those to set up until you see a creamy film on the top of them, and then move them back and pour your next row of molds in front of the ones that are setting up. When it comes to votives, there are several problems that you may encounter. I am not going to lie to you....these little guys are tricky! Votives have to be poured twice because votive wax sinks after the first pour. On your first pour, fill your votive molds until there is only  $\frac{1}{16}$ " of the mold not filled. If you completely fill your votive mold, you will end up with a sloppy second pour. If you pour your votive molds below the  $\frac{1}{16}$ " mark, your votives may appear to show where you did your second pour. For the absolute best results, you will want to save enough wax from this first pour to do your second pour. 4 lbs. of wax tends to make approximately 32 candles. It is a good idea to keep that in mind so that you stop pouring when you hit the 32 mark. That way you have enough wax left over to do your second pour. Set this pot aside (not on a heat source) for your second pour.

**3.** Votives set up relatively quickly so you will want to get started straightening your wicks and centering them in the molds.

**4.** Allow your votives to cool at room temperature for approximately 2 hours. Then you are ready for your second pour. Avoid pouring your second pour before this 2 hour period because you may get sinkage on your second pour as well. Waiting too long after your first pour to do your second pour may result in your votives appearance revealing that you poured them twice. Place your pouring pot containing your left over wax from your first pour on the stove and allow the wax to reach 160-165. Do not add any extra fragrance to this wax because it may cause your second pour to be a different color than the first pour.

**5.** Now, go through and straighten all of your wicks...but do not break the wax when doing this. Pour your second pour only up to the level of your first pour. If you go beyond the first pour fill mark, the wax has a tendency to go behind the first pour and may cause little bubbles in your candles. This may not sound like a terrible problem, but these tiny little bubbles will turn into tiny little holes.....and customers will not like them!

**6.** Allow the votives to set up at least 1 hour and you can pop them out!

**7.** If you are making larger than votive-sized molds, you will follow the same instructions as listed above, but there are two differences:

(a) You will need to poke holes in your candle after your first pour is set up about 1/2 way in order to release any air pockets, and

(b) Larger molds will probably require several repours.

Below you will find a list of possible candle making problems that you may encounter and how to solve those problems.

## TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE

Problem	Possible Causes	What To Do
Candle is smoking when you burn it	High oil content, your wick is too large, your candle may have air pockets	Decrease your amount of fragrance oil, try a smaller wick size, pour your candles at a hotter temp
Candle is not Throwing enough scent	Your fragrance is low quality, you have not used enough fragrance, you have added too much vybar, you left your wax on your heat source for too long allowing the fragrance to evaporate, you are using a wax that is not porous enough	Use a better quality fragrance, use 1 oz. of fragrance per lb. of wax, only add 1/2 tsp. of vybar per lb. of wax, pour your candles right away after you add your fragrance, use a more porous wax
Fragrance oil is settling to the bottom of the candle	You used too much fragrance, you are using a wax that is not porous enough	Use 1oz. of fragrance per lb. of wax, use a more porous wax. If you notice this "oil slick" on the bottom of your pouring pots, stop pouring your melted wax before you get to the oil; otherwise, you will see this oil on the bottom of your finished candles.

Second pour is not blending well with your first pour	You have poured your second pour too cool	Try to do your second pour when your candle is still a little warm. Be careful though, if you pour your second pour too soon, that repour will sink just like your first pour did!
Candle wax is not burning evenly all of the way down	Your wax may be too hard (too high of a melt point), your wick may be too small	You may want to use a softer, lower melt point wax or try using a larger wick diameter. Zinc core wicks tend to burn hotter...try these! CD wicks also burn hotter!
Candle wick is drowning out	Your wick size is probably too small for your candle diameter. You poured your candle above the point where the container starts to change shape.	Try using a larger wick size. Make sure that you pour container candles to the point where the jar begins to change shape. Going above this point will cause melted wax to drown out wicks when burning.
Candle will not come out of your molds	You may have poured your candles too hot, you may have poured your second pour over your fill line, your wax is too soft	Try using a harder wax, use mold release, pour your candles at a lower temp, do not pour above the first pour line, and try putting your candle in the refrigerator to help it pop out. I don't suggest putting candles in the freezer as they may crack.

Candles getting jump lines (visible lines on the outside of the candle or container candle)	Added too much stearic acid, your container or mold was too cool when you poured your candle, you poured at too cool of a temperature.	Try to warm your molds or containers prior to pouring, pour at a hotter temperature, use less additives
Candles are getting small air bubbles which lead to small holes	Got water in the wax when you were pouring, on your second pour you poured above the first pour fill line, your candles cooled too fast, you poured your candles at too cool of temp	Make sure you never get water into your wax when pouring! Water is wax's worst enemy! Pour at a hotter temp, do not pour past the first pour fill line...air will get trapped and will not release before the candle has already set up. Make sure your molds and containers are warm and your working environment is not too cool

# Running your Candle making Operation Efficiently



**1.** When your business grows enough to require you to hire employees, simplification and organization are absolute necessities! I am by no means trying to demean the intelligence or work-ethic of employees, but it is pertinent that you go about training your employees as if they were each a baby trying to take his first step. Employees cannot read your mind, and candle making knowledge is not something that people were born with.....so **MAKE IT EASY ON THEM!**

**2.** You will want to explain step-by-step to them how to make candles.....**EMPHASIZING the importance of quality over and over and over again!** Let them know how picky your customers are! Let them know how many quality candles they will need to make per hour so that your company does not go under due to incurred labor costs. Show them how fast and efficiently you can make candles...they will desire to simulate your efforts! During the training period, don't be afraid to let them know when they make a mistake..... but use this simple technique : Whenever you have positive criticism for someone, always tell them what they are doing correctly first (Always start off with a positive statement) .....then follow that positive statement with your positive criticism. Actually you can use this psychological technique on anyone that you know. Another important thing to consider: make sure that your employees always have someone on hand who can answer their questions. In our business my office is upstairs (2 flights of stairs) from production. Every time that an employee had a question, she would have to go up all of those steps just to ask me. One of the employees recommended one day that it would be really nice if we had an intercom system set up so that she could ask me questions by pushing a button. She even went on to say that this would save the company time and money if we would implement her idea. Guess how long it took me to implement her idea? The same night I was on the phone with office depot ordering 2-way radios (one for me...one for the employees). It really helps us out! You can actually learn two things from this story:

- (a) Communication with your employees must always be readily available to them, and
- (b) Employees are the people who are making the candles for you every day....therefore, it is a good idea to ask them to think of more efficient ways of doing their job. You may even want to offer them some incentives for their good ideas!

Do you know what one of the major things that people look for in their jobs? They want to be valued! Remember the Boeing Strike? The main reason those workers went on strike is because they said they did not feel as though the company valued them. With all of this in mind, I will share with you our training manual.

## *Training Manual*



By the way, you will want to make sure that your wax is turned on at least 2 hours before your employees are scheduled to work or else they will not be able to pour candles for the first two hours that they are scheduled!

**Note:** this training manual is written as though we are conveying to actual employees what they are to do.

1. Employees must clock in or sign in on a specific work schedule sheet.
2. Turn on the stoves ( low -medium setting) and make sure that all of the pans have 1/2" of water in them.
3. Check your "Work Order" sheet to find out which fragrances you will be pouring and which containers will be filled.
4. Begin pulling all of the specific pouring pots for the fragrances that you will be pouring that day. Place as many of the pouring pots that will fit on your stoves, setting the remaining pouring pots on the table next to the stoves. That way all of the pouring pots that you will be using during your shift will be quickly accessible to you. ( NOTE: If you have your employees efficiently set up their job at the beginning of their shift, you will save a ton of time in the long run!)
5. Refer to your work order sheet again to find out what types of containers you will be filling for the day. Pull all of the appropriate containers and set them on your work benches.
6. Refer to your work order again. Anytime you see an \* next to a specific fragrance, you will want to make sure that you make this fragrance one of your priorities during your shift.
7. Fill each pouring pot up to the line that is scratched inside the pouring pot. Make sure that you fill all of the pouring pots on all of the stoves.

**8.** On each pouring pot you will notice that we have written the name of the fragrance and the coloring amount that needs to be added to that pouring pot. Follow the coloring amounts exactly, and go through and color every single pouring pot on the stoves. Mix each pot.

**9.** Choose a fragrance with an \* by it on the work order sheet and begin putting fragrance labels on the neck or side of all of the jars that you will be pouring. It is pertinent that you label your containers with the appropriate fragrance labels for 2 reasons, (1) It will help you distinguish fragrances that are close in color so that orders will be filled properly, and (2) It will help prevent you from forgetting to fill all of the containers that you need to fill for that specific fragrance. Place all unused fragrance labels back in their appropriate places in the label file bin. (**NOTE:** We have a label file bin that has a specific shelf for each fragrance that we use...and we have this file bin conveniently located in our production area).

**10.** Starting with one of the fragrances that have an \* by them on the work order, measure out 1/2 cup of fragrance; pour the fragrance into that specific pouring pot only! **DO NOT ADD FRAGRANCE TO YOUR POURING POTS UNTIL THE VERY MOMENT THAT YOU ARE READY TO POUR THAT SPECIFIC FRAGRANCE.**

**11. NOTE:** you will want to show your employees how full to fill all of the containers that they need to fill. You will also need to communicate to your employees the size and number of wicks to use for each container. Post this information on the wall so that they may easily assess it.

**12.** Fill your containers to the appropriate fill lines. Wait until the wax is starting to set up on the bottom of the containers, and then use the appropriate size and number of wicks for each of your containers.

**13.** Move onto your next fragrance on your work order sheet that has an \* next to it. Each time you finish using a specific pouring pot, make sure that you place that pouring pot back to its alphabetical location on the storage shelf so that it may be easily located by the next shift. Whenever you have a vacancy on your stove for a new pouring pot, put another pouring pot in that vacancy and add your wax and color to it. Place a red check mark next to each container on the work order sheet after it is made. That way the next employee will not duplicate production that has already been done.

**14.** Make sure that you do not move your candles that are setting up until they have a very obvious thick creamy film on the top of them. At that time, you need to move those containers to the back of the work bench in order to make room for your next set of candles that you will be pouring. (Note: If room permits, you may also consider placing all of your ready-to-be moved candles to a specific table designated for that purpose....that way you will have more room on your work benches).

**15.** Repeat all of these steps until approximately 1 hour before your scheduled quitting time.

**16.** First shift: 1 hour before your quitting time:

(a) Check the water levels in all of your roasters to make sure that they have 1/4" of water in them.

(b) Make sure that all of the pans on the stove have at least 1/2" of water in them.

(c) Make sure that color has been added to all of the pots on the stoves.

(d) If you have already added fragrance to a pouring pot and it is 1 hour before your quitting time, make sure that you go ahead and pour that specific pouring pot.

(e) Go through all of the candles that you made for the day and put company labels on the front of each of them.

(f) Move all of the candles that have set up for at least 30 minutes and have company labels on the front of them to the fulfillment area. You will notice that in the fulfillment area the candles are separated by type of container. Make sure that you place the candles in their appropriate places in the fulfillment area. **DO NOT PUT LIDS ON ANY OF THE CANDLES THAT YOU MADE DURING THIS SHIFT!** However, if you notice candles that you did not make that do not have lids, please put lids on them.

(g) Go back to the production area and please make sure that all fragrance bottles are in their appropriate places on the shelves, all pouring pots that have been used are put in their appropriate places on the shelves, and the work area is as clean as it was when you started your shift.

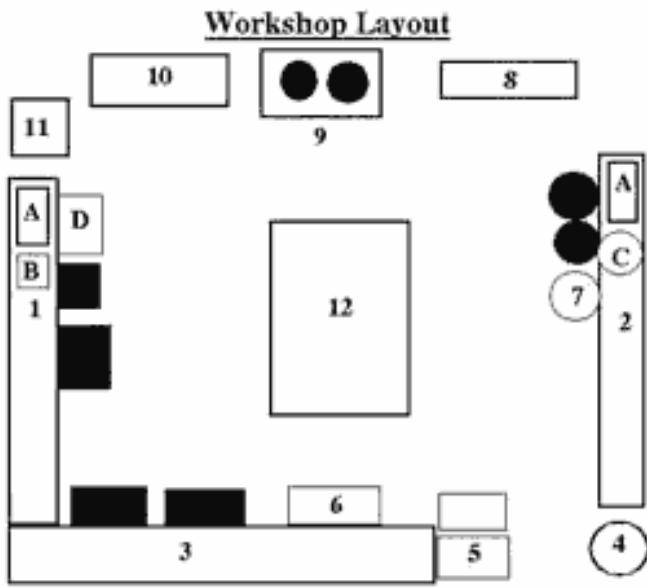
(h) Make sure that all of the buckets containing wicks is filled.

(i) On the "What we need" form, please note anything that you noticed while you were working that we will need to order. Also on this form, if you have any ideas of how we can make your job more time efficient, please let us know! We will do our very best to make your job as simple and time efficient as possible!

(j) Clock out. If you have gone past your scheduled quitting time, please see me or a manager to get their signature on your time card.

**17. Second shift:** Note: second shift will perform the same end of the shift duties that first shift does, but second shift will be allotted 1 1/2 hours before scheduled quitting time to accomplish these extra end of the day duties:

- (a) Make sure that all of the roasters and stove burners and ovens are turned off.
- (b) Make sure that all benches are scraped so that there is no wax on them.
- (c) Make sure that you have at least 2 (1lb) bottles of fragrance for each fragrance. If not, please fill the appropriate bottles and place them in the appropriate place on the shelves.
- (d) Remove wax build up from all of the stoves.
- (e) Turn off all of the lights when you leave.



**KEY**

- 1-Pouring Table
- 2-Pouring Table
- 3-Table to set containers that need to be filled & Labels
- 4-Trash can
- 5-Stack of wax
- 6-Back up Glassware and Containers(under table)
- 7-Back up Fragrance(under table)
- 8-Table to put pouring pots on
- 9-Stove with an oven
- 10-Table to put 1 lb. bottles of fragrance on
- 11-Sink
- 12-Table to put finished candles on ready to label
- A-Turkey roasters/melters
- B-Color Chunks or liquid dye
- C-Wicks in a bucket
- D-Backup glassware & containers

# Marketing your Candles



I am going to mention the most successful marketing strategies that we have used in our candle making business, the mistakes that we have made along the way, and lessons that I have learned about marketing from experts in the field. I will be going over the separate company divisions that our company has, and describing the pros and cons of each of these divisions. Hopefully after reading this material, you will be able to make wiser decisions in your own company....and most of all....I hope you learn from the mistakes that I have personally made in the past with our company.

**Our Fundraising Program** - Out of the numerous divisions of our company, I would like to begin on a positive note! Our fundraising program WORKS! This program allows for a WIN-WIN-WIN situation to occur because all three parties that are involved end up happy. The company is happy because fundraiser programs allow you to sell limited products and a relatively limited number of fragrances. TIME IS MONEY....you will be able to crank these fundraisers out like there's no tomorrow! Plus, if you follow our fundraiser guidelines, you will be making a nice sized profit! The organization is happy because they are selling something that people like, the products are reasonably priced, and they walk away with a nice lump sum! The customers are happy because they bought merchandise that smells great....and they actually bought something to sponsor a fundraiser that was reasonably priced. It sure does beat buying wrapping paper! Below you will find the specifics on our fundraising program. What can I say....I wouldn't change a thing about it....Don't fix something unless it is broken!

## Fundraiser Info



This is the info that we send out to potential fundraisers

**1.** Nature's Garden Candles are all hand-poured using only the finest ingredients! We use special highly-porous wax that allows our wax to absorb more fragrance. All of our candles contain 3 times the amount that most companies use. Best of all, our candles are affordably priced; customers rarely buy just one candle!

**2.** Your fundraiser will include our top-selling 20 fragrances. This gives customers a wonderful variety to choose from!

**4.** Participants are asked to collect all money due at the time the orders are placed. Personal checks are to be made out to the person in charge of the fundraiser. At the end of the fundraiser, a check or money order for the entire amount due is to be made out by the person in charge of the fundraiser. If your organization pays with a personal check, Nature's Garden will issue a check for the profit earnings as soon as the check clears.

**5.** Most Fundraisers last 2-3 weeks. Once all orders are placed, please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery. Nature's Garden will even pay for 50% of the shipping charges for your organization!

**6.** Nature's Garden will separate merchandise for you (per participant) so that you are not hassled with sorting the merchandise yourself! This is a service that most fundraiser companies do not provide!

**7.** Nature's Garden wants to help your organization make money fast! When you book a fundraiser with Nature's Garden we will mail you a sample of one of our candles that you are free to burn! We are confident that we have the Strongest Candles on the Market! Best of all, the prices of the fundraiser merchandise is extremely affordable! If you have further question, please contact **Deborah Ward at (440) 322-6799 or email us!** We look forward to hearing from you!

## *How to Start Your Own Fundraiser Program*



Doing fundraisers has been very profitable for our company in the past. I truly believe that by doing fundraisers, you will be able to see dynamic changes in the profitability of your company within a short time frame.

1. The very first thing you need to do is to figure out what products you would like to offer for fundraisers. We offer the following items: 28 oz. apothecary jars, 16 oz. apothecary jars, 10 oz. apothecary jars, a 3oz. flowerpot trio, and a set of 2 oz. hexagons with 4 hexagons in the set. We also sell bath salts that we put in a 20 oz. glass cylinder with a lid.

2. Decide what fragrance selection you will allow the customers to choose from. We stick with only 20 fragrances, and we do allow the customers to pick and choose which fragrances they want in their flowerpots and hexagons. We have found that people will buy more if they are allowed to choose which fragrances they get in the items that we sell in sets.

3. Sit down and totally brain storm! Write down everyone you know. Are any of these people affiliated with any types of groups? Girl scouts, PTA, Cub scouts, school groups, little league softball, baseball teams, cheerleader squads, sports groups, church groups, ect.

**4.** Contact everyone on your list and see if they might be willing to consider selling candles and bath items for their fundraisers. You will be totally amazed at how many people will say YES!

**5.** In order to keep everything very very easy, offer the organization 35% of the total sale. If they would like to hand out Top sales prizes or anything like that, they can take it out of their 35% in order to cover it. I have found that when you get in the middle of top-sales awards, the winner that you come up with may not be the same person that the person in charge of the fundraiser came up with. So, in order to save yourself the headache, just let them figure out all of that! We have also run the fundraisers another way: offering the organization \$2 per candle or set of candles sold, and then offering them 10% of their total sale in addition to the \$2 per candle. Both ways of conducting the fundraisers work, but the 35% method is much easier.

**6.** Find out from the organizations who are interested in doing a fundraiser the following information: (1) When will the fundraiser begin? (2) Who will the customers make their checks out to? You will not want to accept personal checks, have the customers make their checks out to a specific person in charge or the organization.

**7.** Take photos of your merchandise so that customers will be able to see what they are going to purchase. This does not have to be in color, but make sure it is vivid. Place item numbers next to each product you are selling along with a price.

**8.** On a separate sheet, you will want to make up some sort of order form so that customers may order the items. Make sure you include a list of your fragrances. Make sure there is a place that the customer can write their names, addresses, and phone numbers. It is also a good idea to personalize the order form sheet for each separate fundraiser.

**9.** The fundraiser participants will go out and sell your candles and bath products to people they know, and they will collect the money at the time of the sale. All checks that they receive will be made out to the specified person in charge or the organization.

**10.** Fundraisers should last for only 2-3 weeks.

**11.** At the end of the fundraiser, the person in charge will write your company a check for the total of the fundraiser minus their 35% earned on the fundraiser.

**12.** Let the person in charge know that it will take 2-3 weeks to fill all orders. This way you will have time to cash the check and make sure that it clears. If it does not clear for some reason, you will have time to work this out with the person in charge.

**13.** Photocopy each order form so that the organization and you have copies of the sales. By the way, all of the names on the order forms are LEADS for more sales with your company! So, make those copies!

**14.** When you pull the orders, pull each customer's order separate in order to save them time going through all of their stuff when they receive their huge order! They will really appreciate you taking the time to do this for them!

**15.** On a postcard, type out information on how to properly burn candles. Make sure you include candle-burning warnings! On the back of the postcard, type out some type of coupon that the customer may use with your company in the future! Offer them 20% their next purchase, or \$5 off, or something like that.....BUT use these postcards as LEADS for future sales with your company. This is your opportunity to let these customers know that they can buy directly from you. Now, make sure that you put one of these postcards in each customers bag! That is the main reason it is beneficial for you to take the time to pull each customers' order separate!

Try to get the organization to book another fundraiser with you in the future! Ask them if they would like to do this again...say in 6 months....1 year? Good Luck to You! Wish all of you the best of luck with fundraising! This is how we do our fundraisers; hope it works as well for all of you as it has us!

## *Marketing Information Cont.*



*\*Please note that this was written back when we operated a candle making company, we do not currently have wholesale distributors, nor do we anticipate this in the future.\**

**1.** Retail division- I would like to start by saying that we have never owned a retail store and I do not do any of my own retail sales myself. You are probably wondering.....how do you survive? We have independent sales reps that do our dirty work for us. Actually we call these people Wholesale Distributors. They are not employees of our company. Each of these people has their own vendor's license and files their own sales tax. What we do is pretty simple: The wholesale distributors take orders from their customers. They consolidate all of their orders for a week onto one form, and mail, email, or fax that form to us with a check for the retail price of the merchandise MINUS their discount of 37%. We do not bag the orders according to their specific customers....we simply read the order consolidation form and put those specific candles in boxes for the wholesale distributors to either pick-up or have shipped to them. The wholesale distributors that require us to ship their merchandise to them simply add 12% of the net sale (before taxes) onto the each customer's order and send that amount along with the payment for their merchandise.

This program has worked relatively well for us in the past, but we have learned many lessons from this division alone! Having sales reps that are located in different time zones than we are in has at times become a big headache! Regardless how many times that I have stated that our business hours end at 6:00 M-F and end at 1:00 on Sat, we get calls from these sales reps all hours of the night. Another problem that we have faced is that since these wholesale distributors are actually considered "Their own boss", many of them feel as though they have to right to tell top management how to conduct business. There have been times where I have to tell myself, "Deborah, you don't have to ask them permission when you make a decision." I am a very friendly person, and I guess according to my husband, I try to be the employees' friend too often. If you learn anything that I am telling you....keep this in mind.....Don't speak about anything with your employees except business! If you decide to start your own sales rep program, the same principle applies! Although they are "Their own Boss", if you own the company, you have the right to say good-bye to them at any time....so ultimately they are employees of yours! Talk only business to these people....don't favor anyone more than another employee....and keep in mind that they work for you! Do I sound kind of disgruntled? The program works, don't get me wrong, there is just a ton of headaches that go with it!

## *Marketing Information Cont.*



In this section I will mention programs that we have tried that I personally did not feel were worth all of our efforts. WHOLESALE to SMALL SHOPS- actually we really don't spend any of our time anymore trying to get wholesale candle sales, but we absolutely have decided just recently to stop selling our candles at low minimums. Here's the reason, say you have a minimum purchase of \$50 and a small smoke shop buys exactly your minimum.....for some reason when they buy a few candles from you they want you to stop by weekly to manage their account, see if they need any more candles, ect. I will tell you right now, it is not worth the gas that I have spent in my van. You figure, when you sell your products at wholesale prices, you take your total cost and double it. That is what you charge for wholesale merchandise. Retail is your total cost tripled. Considering that that one smoke shop only spends \$50....leaving you with a \$25 profit. Now deduct gas money.....oh....what about the time you spend stopping in managing the account? I guess the most valuable lesson that I have learned about wholesaling at small minimums is , "My time is one of the most valuable things to me....I just don't have enough hours in the day to spend doing something that takes away from the priorities in my life."

Which brings me to another marketing approach that I feel is not worth the effort or time.... Selling on Consignment. Selling on consignment is a situation where a company allows you to sell your merchandise in their store and they get to keep an average of 25% of each sale. You are probably thinking, why do you think that is bad when you pay your distributors 37%? Once again, I feel that in this situation falls into the category of TIME IS MONEY category. You will be spending a lot of your time restocking shelves. You will have to monitor the sales that are made at each of your locations. I personally don't like the idea.

**Final Word:** I would like to personally thank you for choosing Natures Garden for your candle making supplies. If you ever need additional assistance, please contact us at [info@naturesgardencandles.com](mailto:info@naturesgardencandles.com) or call our **HUG (Help You Grow) Line at 1-866-647-2368**. We will be more than happy to help you succeed! Smiles! Deborah Ward



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