

Introduction to Herbs

In addition to using herbs in remedies and cooking, many 19th Century Americans valued the ornamental and fragrant nature of herb plantings in gardens. The Shakers were reputed as the sellers of quality herb seeds and medicines. They were the largest supplier of herbs in the United States and Europe. Seed sales rose when they presented detailed descriptions of the products when selling them. They devoted the month of May to plow, rake and plant herbs like sage. The sage was then picked and dried in a kiln. The dried herb was then exported to Europe. In 1843, the Shakers offered pot-herbs in their catalogs that could be used in cooking. Sage along with summer savory, sweet marjoram, and thyme were one of such herbs that were considered “basic culinary herbs.”ⁱ

ⁱ Sloat, Caroline. *A Growing Collection*. Old Sturbridge Village. 17 February 2008.
<http://www.osv.org/explore_learn/document_viewer.php?DocID=1030.>