

Terry Durham founded the River Hills Harvest Elderberry Producers, a grower-supported group. He and his partner, Roger Lenhardt, aim to make River Hills Harvest a national label for elderberry products. They produce American-made elderberry jams, jellies, juices, and medicinal products.

Thanks to Durham, Boone County probably has the most acres planted for cultivation in the United States. He grows five varieties of elderberries on 37 acres of this farm. Durham started growing the plants on this farm in 2004. Durham said he will continue to focus on the health markets and the elderberry juice & hope to see the elderberry recognized as “Missouri’s fruit.”

Once the stems are removed from the fruit, the berries are rinsed twice, sanitized, packed into 20-pound pails and immediately frozen in a freezer trailer behind the barn. From there, most go to Persimmon Hill Farm, west of Branson, where they are processed into elderberry juice, a “Throat Coat and Herbal Cordial” and elderberry jelly. The final products are sold under the River Hills Harvest label.

Celebrity doctors, like Dr. Oz, have jumped on the elderberry bandwagon, touting elderberry juice as a healthy potion for the immune system.

Website: riverhillsharvest.com