



You Can't Wear Your Moisturizer and Eat It Too:

ORGANIC
AND
NATURAL
EXPOSED

We see the world today through green-colored glasses. We want everything to be environmentally friendly, to be healthy for us, and have minimal impact on the planet. We want our food to be organic, natural, and locally produced. This movement has given rise to new expectations. Now companies and consumers are trying to bridge the organic food market with the body care industry and apply the same ideals to both. But in the same way that we don't expect our bicycle to come equipped with side air bags, we can't expect to both wear our moisturizer and eat it, too (unless it's olive oil).

What does organic mean?

The body care industry often uses the words “organic” and “natural” in their company name and product descriptions despite the fact that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not define or regulate organic labeling for these products. Some of the ingredients used may be USDA-certified organic, which means farmed without most pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, genetic engineering, or irradiation. However, it is not yet possible to certify the whole product organic unless it consists of only agricultural ingredients, such as aloe vera gel or a simple anhydrous (no water) oil, ointment, or body butter.

Is organic labeling deceptive?

Yes. Most shampoos and lotions are made up of 60% water, yet a company may label them as “100% Organic” even though water cannot be certified as organic. The company can make such a claim by listing organic botanical extracts (also referred to as hydrosols) or aloe vera juice in place of water as the top ingredients, though the majority of those ingredients are usually nothing more than water infused with a fraction of organic plant material. This makes for natural-seeming products with a long list of botanical names, but the benefits may be negligible and the consumer is misled.

In February 2006, *Consumer Reports* stated, “Unless a personal-care product consists primarily of organic agricultural ingredients... it's pointless to buy organic in this category. ‘Many of the ingredients in personal-care products didn't grow out of the ground but in test tubes—they're chemicals,’ says Lauren Sucher, director of public affairs at the EWG [Environmental Working Group]. Just because a product has the word ‘organic’ or ‘natural’ in its name doesn't necessarily mean it's safer. Only 11 percent of ingredients found in personal-care products, organic or not, have ever been screened for safety.”¹

What does natural mean?

In May 2008 the Natural Products Association (NPA) defined the term natural through a list of criteria and began offering a certification program and seal. The exorbitant cost of NPA certification precludes small companies from obtaining the seal and there is still no legal or scientific definition of the word natural. Without government regulation, the industry continues to self regulate and use the term in any way they choose.

Sometimes the word is used to refer to ingredients that once originated from plant and vegetable sources, but which do not occur in nature. For example, *potassium cocoyl hydrolyzed soy protein* is a surfactant (foaming agent) derived primarily from coconut, soy, and potassium. However, in order to synthesize these natural materials into a new substance they have to undergo hydrolysis through one of three different ways, using an enzyme, an acid, or an alkaline.² The final ingredient, like most of those in bath and beauty products, is the result of a chemical reaction to produce something that does not occur in nature. That doesn't make it necessarily bad, dangerous, or unhealthy. It only means that you can't just read a name and know all about that ingredient.

Cetearyl alcohol is another case in point. It does not have the same physical characteristics or drying effects of rubbing alcohol, rather it is a white, waxy solid that is used as an emollient and thickener for lotions and hair products. While it is typically produced from natural fats and oils, it can also be manufactured synthetically.³ *Cetearyl alcohol* from one supplier may be processed with petrochemical solvents, harm the rain forest, and cost only \$2 per kilo. Body Time's premiere Botanicals line uses a *cetearyl alcohol* from France that is processed and extracted with water, is environmentally green, and costs \$30 per kilo.

Natural, therefore, is more than an ingredient; it's also a process. And the consumer's vision of natural may be obscured by the industry's use of deception.

Does Body Time use preservatives?

Yes. Preservatives keep products fresh and from deteriorating. If your bath and beauty products were comprised only of agricultural material they would quickly become moldy, rancid, and irritate your skin. Even if you stored your products in the refrigerator, they would eventually go bad. (We suggest that a product should not be kept longer than one to two years.) Preservatives also protect against contamination from normal usage caused by introducing bacteria into the product, such as E.coli and staphococcus, which can overwhelm even healthy immune systems.

Preservatives are essential components of many cosmetic formulas, but not all of them are bad or harmful.

Parabens, the most widely used preservatives in cosmetic products, are controversial for their potential link to breast cancer. In 2005, the Cosmetic Ingredient Review (CIR) re-assessed the safety of parabens and determined to not change its original conclusion that parabens are safe. The FDA concurs with that opinion.⁴ Consumer concern persists, however, and some argue that a dearth of scientific evidence leaves the question of paraben safety unanswered.

Body Time's Botanicals line of products does not contain any parabens, but rather uses many plant-source preservatives that have an empirical or historical use, such as mint, cinnamon, and willow bark extract used by Native Americans for hundreds of years. Body Time has also removed parabens from many, but not all of our original product line. We are still reformulating a few remaining products adhering to the lab's strict requirements for safety and efficacy.

Body Time: Organic? Natural?

Body Time's high quality, fairly priced bath and body products are formulated by two local businesses that follow impeccable standards of cleanliness. Our premiere Botanicals line, started 12 years ago, synthesizes innovative chemistry with the best ingredients—many organic and cleanly processed, real plant sources—to create rich, aromatic, and luxurious products. Every Botanicals product contains three to four essential oils for maximum efficacy and magnificent scent.

Our original line of products, started in 1970, utilizes time-honored experience and traditional ingredients to produce some of our best sellers, like China Rain Perfume Oil, Vitamins A,D,&E Moisturizer, Body Shampoos, and Jojoba Cream.

Body Time adheres to the FDA-mandated INCI (International Nomenclature of Cosmetic Ingredients) standards of ingredient labeling, provides all product ingredients on its Web site and in stores, and will honestly answer any questions.

We do not make any broad sweeping, deceptive organic claims. Our Botanicals line uses some ingredients that are certified organic and sustainably grown on small, local farms. Our other ingredients, however, are technically not organic because they come from tiny family farms that offer a superlative product but which can't afford certification.

Body Time makes choices that reflect its commitment to quality, consistency and community. We have a human connection to suppliers all over the world and in our own backyard. Their integrity and intentions, their care for the land and relationship with us, give our products an energetic quality that transcends the science and the ingredients used to make them. That comes back to you.

What makes Body Time different?

In 39 years our service to you and our original philosophy have never wavered. We still refill your bottles at a discount, we still recycle, we still custom scent unscented products and blend perfumes for you. Little did we know in 1970 that our business practices would set standards for the entire industry. But long after our imitators have discontinued their personal service, we remain small and small is beautiful. It lends itself to real relationships with customers, employees, and vendors, which is the heart of life.

We don't need huge profits and stores all over the world to be successful. We think of success as being part of a community, hiring local people, promoting environmental integrity and ethical business practices. We think of success as providing the most effective, pleasurable body care experience. Honestly.

1. *ConsumerReports.org*. "When Buying Organic Pays (and Doesn't)." February 2006. <http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/food/diet-nutrition/organic-products/organic-products-206/when-buying-organic-pays-and-doesnt/index.htm>.

2. *Sinerga*. "Welcome in the World of Nature." April 2007. www.sinerga.it/eng/brochure/WORLDNATURE.pdf.

3. *CosmeticsInfo.org*. "Cetearyl Alcohol." www.cosmeticsinfo.org/ingredient_details.php?ingredient_id=481.

4. *U.S. Food and Drug Administration, CFSAN/Office of Cosmetics and Colors*. "Parabens." March 20, 2006. www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/cos-para.html.

Our Commitment to the Big Picture: the True Cost of Being Labelled Organic

Body Time's supplier, Kailash, in Nepal has a company that makes just 50 kilos a year of beautiful, pure essential spikenard and palmarosa oils. Kailash can't afford the exorbitant cost of flying in a USDA agent, the document processing fees, or marketing costs, but he makes the best quality oils available.

It's an issue of fair trade. Without the support of companies like Body Time, farmers like Kailash might not even exist anymore. Or like Elliot, who could not get his shipment of Shea Butter off the dock during a recent political crisis in Sudan. Body Time wired him the money so he could prepay his shipment and have it released.

Gipson's Golden, a Sonoma county beekeeper and beeswax producer, stands as another example. Because bees have a very widespread roaming pattern, beeswax is difficult to certify organic, making Australia home to one of the few organic suppliers. Comparatively, Gipson's Golden beeswax is produced without the use of any chemicals, does not come with a freight carbon footprint, is less expensive, and most importantly is a far superior product.