

Posted on 8th Nov 2015



Getting To Terms with Organic Cosmetics

If you have sensitive skin, suffer from allergies or wear contact lenses, you know the challenge of finding skin care or make-up that works well, is comfortable and looks great. No doubt as you searched, you noticed many products pushing their organic credentials and wondered if that might be the solution. But what does the word organic actually mean when it comes to cosmetics?

It's an excellent question.

Before food products can be sold as organic, they must meet strict standards regulated by EU law. Surprisingly, there are no EU regulations or mandatory industry standards regarding which cosmetics and skin care products may or may not be sold as organic. With these products, organic is marketing term that brands and manufacturers are free to interpret as they see fit. This makes shopping for organic cosmetics terribly confusing.

Luckily, the organic cosmetics industry and several registered organic certification bodies have come together to help consumers find the brands who walk the walk and don't just talk the talk. If you want to ensure your cosmetics are produced, packaged and promoted according to the industry's best organic practices look for labels from organisations such as Ecocert. Ecocert is one of the largest organic certification bodies in the world and requires a minimum of 95% of all plant-based ingredients be organically produced before they will certify a product as organic. NATorigin, whose cosmetics have been certified by Ecocert, has more detailed information on Ecocert standards and how they are maintained. www.natorigin.co.uk/Certified-organic.html

So that is what organic means from a regulatory point of view but we also need to understand what organic doesn't mean. Despite what you might think, organic certifications aren't designed to regulate the impact cosmetics will have on your health. They are in place to regulate the impact of cosmetic production on the environmental. Very important to be sure, but not hugely helpful if what you need first and foremost is a moisturiser that won't trigger a rash or irritate your eyes.

Organic certified cosmetics are a great place to start if you want to be eco-friendly and they generally have fewer problem ingredients than mainstream cosmetics. But if you want to be eco-friendly and you have specific dermatological or ophthalmological challenges, you'll have to look deeper into the world of organics for products specifically designed for you. Look for products often called "extreme tolerance" or "anti-allergy," for terms like 'bio-inertia' and 'hypoallergenic.' Other helpful guides are labels from organisations such as Allergy UK who test specifically for anti-allergen formulations and ingredients.

If you'd like to know more about how and where the concepts of organic cosmetics, hypoallergenic and contact-safe cosmetics overlap and diverge, check out the information from the NATorigin FAQ from Butterflies Healthcare. www.natorigin.co.uk/Faqs.html

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Featured article for NATorigin cosmetics and skincare

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