

Raising awareness, increasing confidence



In a regular column for *Organic & Natural Business*, Dr Mark Smith, Co-Chair of the Sustainable Beauty Coalition at the British Beauty Council, encourages retailers to get involved in the forthcoming Natural Cosmetics Week.

In the ever-evolving landscape of natural beauty, sustainability isn't just a buzzword – it's a movement. As we approach Natural Cosmetics Week, which begins on November 23, it's crucial to reflect on the importance of ingredient transparency in the beauty industry. This initiative, championed by NATRUE, is more



than a celebration; it's a call to action for producers, manufacturers, distributors, retailers and consumers alike to advocate for natural and sustainable beauty.

Today's consumers are more informed and aware than ever. They not only seek products that promise performance and deliver results, they want to understand the journey each ingredient took to reach their jars, tubes and bottles. This growing demand for transparency in ingredient sourcing and labelling is reshaping the industry. Consumers want to trust that the products they use are not only effective but also ethically sourced and environmentally friendly. In fact, 80 per cent of UK consumers agree that everyone has a personal responsibility to protect the environment¹.

Transparency in ingredient sourcing means more than simply listing ingredients on a label. It's about creating a clear and honest narrative that reassures consumers about the integrity and sustainability of their products. This narrative must be understandable, non-confusing, and easily accessible. Everyone involved, from the collectors of the cosmetic ingredients to the final point of sale, plays an important role in this process. For instance, natural and organic beauty brands can effectively

demonstrate their commitment to sustainable and ethical sourcing by certifying their cosmetic products. Obtaining certifications from reputable organisations can significantly increase consumer confidence. For example, the NATRUE label guarantees that the formulas of all products bearing the NATRUE label have been verified by an

independent third-party certifier, ensuring they meet high standards of natural and organic ingredients. Highlighting such certifications on packaging, in-store and across marketing materials provides an instant assurance of quality and sustainability to shoppers.

Multiple, pharmacies, health and beauty retailers also play a crucial role in consumer education. Often, the first information consumers receive about a product comes from what they see in-store and online. As such, retailers and selling points have the power to place greenwashing-free products on their shelves, helping consumers avoid misleading and false claims. They can ensure that products use clear, science-based, verified claims, and that the labels they display are truthful. Additionally, educating staff to answer questions and provide detailed information about products and certifications can assist consumers in making informed decisions, whilst improving their trust in the retailer.

Natural Cosmetics Week serves as an ideal platform for beauty brands, retailers, raw material suppliers, and any lover of natural and organic cosmetics to show their commitment to natural and sustainable beauty. NATRUE will be encouraging the beauty industry to

promote and inspire the use of genuinely natural and organic cosmetics and to educate all those who wish to know more about the sector.

The collaboration between brands, retailers, and consumers is essential in driving this movement forward. By working together, they can ensure that natural and organic cosmetics are truly what they claim to be, paving the way for a more transparent and environmentally-friendly beauty industry. Natural Cosmetics Week is a perfect occasion to highlight these efforts and inspire others to join the movement, making a tangible difference in the world of beauty.

Find out how you can join in by visiting www.natrue.org/why-us/international-day-of-natural-cosmetics/

References:

¹ <https://store.mintel.com/report/uk-sustainability-in-beauty-and-personal-care-market-report-2022#:~:text=53%25%20of%20UK%20shoppers%20have,decant%20into%20their%20empty%20products>

In 2014, Dr Mark Smith joined NATRUE, the organisation behind the international certification seal for natural and organic cosmetics,



as Regulatory & Scientific Manager, becoming Director General in 2016. Mark is a passionate campaigner for greater transparency in a sector clouded by greenwash, and in 2020, was appointed to the Affiliate Board of the British Beauty Council, where he has been championing better sustainable business practices and standards on the steering committee of the Council's Sustainable Beauty Coalition. Mark is also part of the new EcoBeautyScore Consortium, which is establishing a transparent score system to visibly rate beauty products for their level of sustainability, to help consumers make more responsible choices. In 2023, he was appointed Co-Chair of the British Beauty Council's Sustainable Beauty Coalition.