

Cruelty-Free Cosmetics and Skin Care

What Local Companies are Using

by Sophie Charles

While rubbing ground up bugs or sheep fat on one's face doesn't sound like a good idea, many people are doing just that each time they apply their cosmetics. Most mainstream cosmetic brands use superficial culprits such as ground up beetles, sheep fat, talc, polyethylene glycol, petrolatum, parabens, mineral oil and other transgressors. On top of that, many of them also practice animal testing with their products.

When reading ingredient labels on products such as mainstream eye shadow, lipstick, moisturizer or blush it is likely that some of the above ingredients will be found. Therefore, it's important to take into consideration what the ingredients listed actually are. For example, lanolin is a fat taken from the oil glands of sheep often found in mascara, eye liner and eye shadow. Petrolatum is a moisturizer akin to mineral oil that coats the skin but also clogs pores and can trap toxins inside our skin. Petrolatum and polyethylene glycol has been deemed dangerous by the FDA and are both found in traditional lipstick and lip-gloss.

Taking a deeper look at carmine

and its other appellations; cochineal, carminic acid, crimson lake, and natural red #4 is also a good idea. Carmine, and the other appellations listed here, is essentially ground insects. It is a red pigment derived from the crushed female cochineal (beetles) and can be found in makeup, shampoo and food and candy products that are dyed a red-dish hue. To yield just one pound of this dye means 70,000 beetles are crushed. Even if individuals do not care about the beetle itself, it may be smart to consider whether using crushed beetles on the skin or in food is a good idea.

Sure, the amounts used daily of these products are small, but many don't use cosmetic products most days for the majority of their lives. That makes for a lot of less than desirable ingredients being absorbed through the skin.

Many people never think to read the ingredient label because the words are long or hard to pronounce, so we blindly trust it must be safe if applied to skin, but a little research will quickly show that it may be time for a cosmetic makeover.

Making the switch to cruelty-free cosmetics is quite easy. There are many

new brands and high-end favorites available, such as those listed below:

Brittanie's Thyme



Crafted with passion and integrity, Brittanie's Thyme is a women-owned USDA-certified organic personal care products company based in Cedar Springs, Michigan. CEO, Nancy Metzger believes that natural and organic is a life choice, not a fashion or a trend. Therefore, their ingredients as well as their prices reflect this philosophy.

Brittanie's Thyme products use no fillers, artificial preservatives, artificial fragrances or dyes. They produce only small batches of each product at a time to ensure freshness, and they strive to produce products that have a minimal effect on the planet, yet provide maximum results for their customers. It's also important to note that they do not test any products on animals.

For more information on Brittanie's Thyme, visit BrittaniesThyme.com. See ad, page 14.

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Founders,
Roy Bodien &
Julie Phillips

Elina Organics



Daphne Meyers of Lakeshore Natural Skin Care in Zeeland says, "When Lakeshore Natural Skin Care first

opened back in 2008, it was very important to us as holistic practitioners to find an all-natural, organic skin care line of products. We met with several companies that claimed to be 'all-natural' and organic, but as we read through their list of product ingredients,

it was very clear to us they were not. The integrity of our business is at stake - and we're not going to compromise on the product line we use. Then, a friend recommended Elina Organics (ElinaOrganics.com). Elina Organics products are everything they claim to be: free of dyes, perfumes, chemical toxins and preservatives—and they are never tested on animals.

"Working with a company that doesn't do animal testing is very important to us—we're animal lovers! Elina Organics products are so safe, you can actually eat them—and we have done just that to prove it! Who wouldn't want to put something that safe on their skin?"

For more information on Lakeshore Natural Skin Care, see ad, pages 24 & 47.

Èminence Organics



Both Holistic Care Approach in Grand Rapids and The Skincare Center and Spa at Tamarac carry Èminence Organics as their chosen product line because they set a new standard in skin care products. They are plant-based, farm-to-spa treatments that are certified organic, vegan and composed of

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bio-dynamically farmed ingredients. They are free of any animal or chemical products such as lanolin's, sodium lauryl sulfates, alcohol, tricolsan, parabens and coal tar colors.

Biodynamic farming is one of the most ethical and sustainable forms of agriculture in existence. It excludes the use of artificial fertilizers and pesticides and relies on the natural interdependence between all the different components of the farm to create a self-sustaining, balanced and harmonious environment. The ingredient farms for their products are in Hungary and are powered by solar and wind energy and their laboratories are heated using geothermal heat. From Eminence Organic's farming to their packaging to their office procedures, they whole-heartedly strive to be a green company, and they further commit to that with their Forests for the Future program, where they plant a tree in one of 19 developing countries for every product sold.

For more information on *Holistic Care Approach*, see ad, page 19.

For more information on *The Skincare Center and Spa at Tamarac*, see ad, page 27.

Essanté Organics



Molecular Miracle Rejuvenation in Grandville carries Essanté Organics, which are 100% certified organic, Toxic Free™ and wildcrafted products, meaning the

plants are harvested from their natural or "wild" habitat.

Continuously researching, developing, formulating and delivering healthy, organic products that outperform products made with industrial chemicals, Essanté Organics' mission is to eliminate toxins from everyone's

life, one household at a time. With their products, customers enjoy a rewarding mission too: they impact their life, the planet and charities that assist people and animals in need each time they order, all while enjoying the true health benefits of the organic products.

For more information on *Molecular Miracle Rejuvenation*, see ad, page 26.

Face Naturals



Teri Kelley, owner of Serendipite Organiques asks, "Wouldn't it be nice to know whatever

you put on your body, head-to-toe, is not only organic and non-GMO, but also cruelty-free?" Face Naturals offers all of that and more. No animals are harmed in the making or creation of ingredients, nor is any animal testing done for any of their products—many items are even vegan. Kelley adds, "Another wonderful toxin-free bonus to Face Naturals' products is that you'll never find any chemical fragrance. The aromas come only from organic essential oils and herbs!"

Face Naturals offers a wide variety of products including everything a person needs to cleanse and beautify their bodies. Their products include shampoos, conditioners, hair serum, facial cleansers, hydrosols, moisturizers, masks, tooth cleansers, lip balms, deodorant, bar soaps, body cleansers, body butters, body lotions, deodorizing body powder and more, all of which align with their goal to manufacture wholesome, truly natural, healthy skin care made with organic ingredients that support wellness and makes people feel stunningly beautiful.

To order Face Naturals products, visit mkt.com/serendipite-organiques. see ad, page 45.

Keeki Pure and Simple



Janelle Goltz of Grand Rapids Natural Health says, "At Grand Rapids Natural Health, we strive to educate people that what they put on their skin effects their overall health starting with the products we use in our spa services. After research, we found Elina Organics (based out of Kalamazoo, Michigan) and Keeki Pure and Simple (KPS) (based out of Grand Rapids, Michigan), two product lines that only offer food grade and organic products. A wonderful quality these products have in common are they are never tested on animals and are derived only from natural earth based products, resulting in a complete cruelty free product."

Specifically, KPS Renew is a cream Grand Rapids Natural Health uses in many of their facials. It has proven to have many anti-aging properties including wrinkle and scar reduction along with tightening and firming of the skin.

Elina Organics designs their products based on the theory that people should never apply to their skin a product they fear ingesting, making them natural and organic certified. This brand is unique in the fact that they tweak their formulas seasonally. Elina products undergo independent scientific testing to prove important qualities such as anti-aging, anti-oxidant genes that stimulate collagen and keratin production.

For more information on *Grand Rapids Natural Health*, see ad, page 24.

Consciously investing in good, cruelty-free cosmetics and skin care lines can make a big difference in personal health and a more positive impact on the environment. It may very well be time for a worthy cosmetic makeover.

Sophie Charles is a frequent contributor to *Natural Awakenings Magazine*.