

Formulating Natural Cosmetics

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The market for natural cosmetics has increased rapidly in the last 15 years. But both legislation -such as health claims/regulation-and the real meaning of natural cosmetics is evolving only slowly, opening up, however, a wellspring of innovation opportunities for consumers.

Consumer acceptance looking for healthy and natural cosmetics, plays, in fact, a pivotal role and needs to be assessed carefully before new products are launched. The basis of consumer acceptance is influenced by endogenous factors such as the consumer characteristics, the purchasing situation and the external recommendations of the product on its functional health benefits. These factors are influenced by the health status of the consumer and his/her individual knowledge about ingredients and product characteristics.

Therefore, to position any new natural cosmetic, scientific support of the functional ingredients used is certainly required, as well as consumer assessment may help to verify the target group and potential communication strategies.

At this purpose *Formulating Natural Cosmetics* organized in 16 Chapters and IV Appendices, is a precious book necessary to select natural ingredients for formulating innovative cosmetics and inspiring new product concepts and markets.

What it is interesting to underline is the simplicity with which the different active ingredients are classified as fixed oils, butters, fat and waxes, essential oils and natural actives, completed of all the specific chemical-physical activities and their traditional uses.

Special chapters are dedicated to minerals, botanical extracts, isoflavones phytohormones and phytoosterols, as well as to natural anti-irritants, colours and gellant agents.

Finally special sections are dedicated to the toxicological information and to the legal challenges the companies should have to distribute natural ingredients and products. Last but not least a comprehensive and detailed appendix (appendix I) is dedicated to the toxicity of essential oils, where all the today scientific data are reported together with SAF and Product Type Consumer Exposure levels, indicating the different IFRA QRA category. Comments on the maximum level of use for dermal sensitization are also reported for all the 11 categories described.

Appendix II is a review of natural colours, their code, CI number, Common name, Name, Colour, Source, Solubility, Supplier and Trade names are reported by an easy readable table.

On Appendix III the materials employed as scrub and abrasive are reported, as well as Appendix IV is dedicated to the glossary describing the more used cosmetic terminologies.

In this period where unattractive wrinkling tend to be viewed in terms associated with old age, i.e

deteriorated appearance, worn out and ugly, and what is beautiful is considered good and attractive, it is not surprising that people should seek to modify their facial appearance to appear younger and healthy.

Thus the use of protective and anti-ageing cosmetics increases year by year and formulators are working under stringent constraints to strike a balance between the skin compatibility, economics and functionality of the natural active ingredients selected. This is also because consumers are asking for effective cosmetic products naturally oriented; so with the ongoing increase in the variety of cosmetic products proposed over the last years, it has become more and more difficult for them to decide the most appropriate products for their needs.

Hence, the success of a *natural* cosmetic today is not only a question of performance and efficacy but also a question of how it is promoted to the potential buyer. Therefore claims on natural products are extremely varied and often depend on the product formulation, the concentration of natural ingredients used, the market and the current trends.

Whenever the nature of the product effect justifies its activity, the claim must be shown. But any kind of support should be acceptable at the condition it can be scientifically and reasonably justified. For all these reasons *Formulating Natural Cosmetics* may be considered the most clear, simply to use, and up-to-date reference guide to formulate innovative and effective cosmetics based on the use of natural ingredients. Many are the natural active ingredients reported and supported by technical data and references, so that a clever cosmetic chemist may easily select the ingredients to use for the formulation designed.

Nevertheless the book may be a supporting source for people involved in marketing and for all students or practitioners interested to better understand the significance of a natural cosmetic.

P. Morganti
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