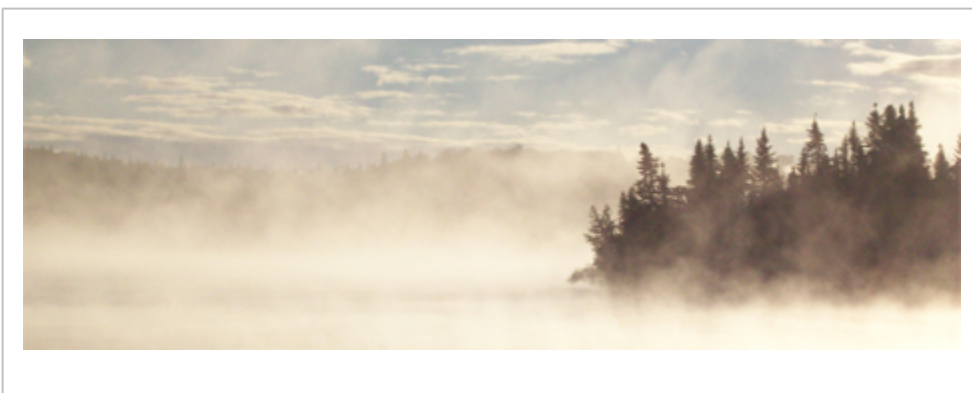


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## Demystifying Ethically Produced Beauty Products

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Guest Post by Mark Wuttke, Principal, Wuttke Group LLC

If you are confused by what is, and what is not, an organic or natural skin care product, you are not alone. As the “green”, consumer-driven market continues to gain enormous momentum, many companies are sprinting to be sure they do not miss out on the financial benefits of this ethical consumption movement.

Already we are seeing traditional skin care companies make much-publicized announcements that they are “going green”. They profess to be truly committed to sustainability in their international farming and ingredient procurement practices as well as their product development initiatives. Should these actions and statements be true as stated and done with honest intention and integrity, fantastic! If all this activity is only a form of public “green washing” then we, as buyers, must beware.

In some instances, are we seeing companies use the words like “organic”, “natural”, and “chemical free” in their company names and marketing collateral. There are also some companies displaying organic trade or consumer membership logos and agricultural certifications in an attempt to earn the trust and confidence of the discerning consumer.

So how do we demystify the hype and understand all of the available information so we do not mislead our customers unknowingly? Failing to get this right can dramatically impact our customer’s confidence and trust in our spa and the spa community as a whole. If it is important to you and your customers to better understand which skin care products are ethically produced and chemically clean, you may want to consider asking your natural skin care brand the following questions:

- What third party certified organic/natural body do you use to certify your products?
- Does the third party certifying body specialize in agricultural or cosmetic organic/natural standards?
- Is your entire product certified organic/natural or only selected ingredients?
- If only selected ingredients are certified, what % of the entire product is certified organic/natural including emulsifiers, preservatives, and water?
- How long has your product been certified organic/natural?
- How long has your company been committed to sustainable organic/natural practices? Please describe these practices.

- Do you know where all of your certified organic/natural ingredients are grown?
- Are your certified ingredients grown and prepared using fair trade practices?
- Do you use chemical and or natural preservatives? If so, what are they?

These few questions will help you determine the depth, transparency, and authenticity of any brand you may be considering for your skin and body care spa partner. The company you select should also be able to assist you and your team in communicating the features and benefits of the brands you choose, so you do not unintentionally mislead any of your valued and loyal customers into buying a product or service that may not meet their needs and or expectations.

*Mark Wuttke heads the Wuttke Group, LLC, a world class business development team with a focus on sustainable luxury, spa, boutique retail, organic luxury and the emerging category of eco-chic. Developing business globally, their clients are in the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Hong Kong, UAE in addition to the USA and Australia. [www.wuttkegroup.com](http://www.wuttkegroup.com)*

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