

# Lavender Notes

Lavender Lady (Australia) Pty Ltd

## What is a Natural Product?

At a time when city populations are increasing and wilderness areas shrinking world-wide, people are looking for ways to be in touch with aspects of life that are in keeping with their original biological make-up. Consequently, large industries have arisen in the areas of food and medicine that attempt to serve the genuine need for natural products, natural solutions and natural lifestyles.

Consumers are becoming more aware and more critical regarding the efficacy of skincare and cosmetic products. Recent developments in consumer buying indicate a special preference for natural and natural-identical products. Manufacturers are well aware of this back to nature movement and, more than ever are seeking substances that show demonstrable beneficial effects in order to lay claim to their products being natural.

The result of this back to nature movement has been that the word "*natural*" is now perhaps one of the most overused words in the English language.

But the question "*What is natural?*" is by no means simple to answer. There is a widespread and glib usage of the word that seems to pre-suppose that we all know and agree upon what "natural" means. But while we all have a personal, intuitive sense of the meaning of "natural", the way that manufacturers in the food and health industries use the concept is in fact remarkably varied.

Some manufacturers imply their products are natural by presenting images of nature like sunshine, blue skies, trees and flowers. They might associate happy, healthy, energetic activities with their products and the inference will be that the product is or promotes something natural. But the product, although it might give benefit to someone, might also be a synthetic, "man-made" substance.

Similarly, companies might call their product natural or "naturals". These products might have say 30 ingredients of which maybe 20 were originally created in a laboratory. On the basis of one or two "natural" ingredients, like aloe for instance, they might strongly promote their products as natural.

At the other end of the spectrum, a company might produce an organically certified product, which in Australia means that 98% of all the ingredients would also be certified as organic. Such a company might also want to call its product natural.

"*Natural*" is a very large topic with many angles. In a world with industrial and consumer pollution, a world with advanced scientific, manufacturing, technological and farming practices, the natural basis of any natural ingredient is something for potential scrutiny. In the end it is up to consumers to choose based on the information they can access.

At Lavender House we define what we mean by natural as follows:-

***All ingredients used in our products are either whole substances occurring in nature, or, they have been directly extracted from a whole, natural and renewable source.***

This definition is open to investigation like any other in the "*natural*" marketplace. However, we believe we are a long way along the road to creating products that do relate honestly with the intuitive sense many people have, *that natural means something relating directly to original nature, something not minutely adapted and configured by human intervention.*

As always the onus is on the buyer and user to beware of the nature of any product. A word or two to the wise:-

**Is the product from a reputable source.**

**Are the ingredients clearly stated on the label.**

**Are the nature of the ingredients and their purpose known.**

**DO NOT BE GUIDED BY PRICE AND/OR SELF PROMOTION OF PRODUCTS**