

UK consumers cite wellness as main driver for organic purchases

4/5/2007 - **A new study has discovered that UK consumers are now putting wellness as a key driver behind the organic cosmetic purchases, as opposed to the ethical needs more notoriously associated with this market.**

According to a new Datamonitor study, 'Brits go au natural', UK citizens are increasingly becoming egocentric with their personal care regimes and are becoming more and more aware of the positive implications of natural care.

Nick Beevers, consumer markets analyst at Datamonitor and author of the study said, "*Consumers buy natural personal care for a number of different reasons aside from ethical and altruistic considerations.*"

"Some of the major drivers behind natural consumption come from more egocentric needs, such as the quest for wellness".

Despite natural care still only amounting to a small proportion of the UK personal care spend, it has seen phenomenal growth rates of 84.2 per cent from 2001 to 2006, compared with just 13.9 per cent for the overall UK market.

The figures show that the trend has gone past the 'bohemian' niche segment it was traditionally associated with, and into the main stream. From this, the social factors behind the market growth have also come under scrutiny.

Britons have allegedly become more concerned with the ingredients that are in their personal care products than in the past, preferring to use products that offer biologically active components rather than the more 'harsh' synthetic components.

Said to have clinically proven health care benefits and better safety profiles, consumers are diversifying past ethical reasoning for organic purchases.

Concern over what they are taking internally has prompted increased awareness of what goes into topical applications.

Indeed, consumers are becoming increasingly demanding in their need for vitamins, botanicals and natural ingredients as opposed to parabens and sulfates.

This in turn lends the notion that organic cosmetics are 'earth friendly beauty solutions' and are better for overall well-being.

Another notion behind the booming trend is that simply seeing the word 'natural' as a standalone concept implies a healthy balance.

Beevers suggests that as Britons increasingly live in a high tech, fast paced environment, they are seeking ways in which to counteract the effect on their bodies. Therefore the word alone evokes an emotional response from the consumer that then relates to their 'emotional wellbeing'.

According to Datamonitor the UK naturals market currently stands at £9mn and is predicted to develop an additional £3m to reach £12m by 2011 - a growth spurt that is being attributed beyond 'green' or ethical reasons.

Indeed nearly a third of Britons, 31.3 per cent, sought cosmetic and toiletry products that have natural credentials in 2006.