



## The 6 guiding principles of the NATRUE Label

### 1) What's inside the product matters the most Focus on ingredients

NATRUE decided to focus on what is inside a product. Ingredients as well as processes are taken account of. NATRUE classified ingredients into three easy-to-understand types depending on the process they have been subjected to:

- Natural ingredients
- Derived natural ingredients
- Nature-identical ingredients

**Natural ingredients** are unmodified, non-GM ingredients that may be obtained only by physical processes or fermentation.

**Nature-identical ingredients** can be either pigments, minerals or preservatives. They are reproduced in the laboratory but exist in nature. These ingredients are allowed when strictly necessary in order to ensure consumer safety (preservatives) or for purity (minerals/pigments). All of them have one essential characteristic: **they can be found in nature.**

**Derived natural ingredients** are the result of permitted chemical reaction processes on only natural ingredients, and are only allowed when a specific function cannot be achieved using natural ingredients.

### Nothing artificial (man-made) is allowed.

The last ingredient is **water** – which **does not fall into the natural ingredient category** because NATRUE does not want to inflate the natural content by allowing water to be taken into account.

### 2) Greenwashing away! 75% rule

The biggest enemy of truly Natural and Organic Cosmetics is greenwashing. Greenwashing means misleading consumers to think a product is “green, natural, eco-friendly” by simply implementing marketing strategies suggesting as much.

NATRUE guarantees that at least 75% of all the individual products in a delimited series (identified either by the brand or the sub-brand) must be compliant with the NATRUE standard. NATRUE prohibits companies to certify only one or two products and then implement marketing strategies, leaving consumers with the impression that the whole line is certified. Certification is a serious process which implies commitment.

### With the NATRUE unique 75% rule we demand a high-level of commitment from the producers.

### 3) NATRUE is not judge and jury! Shared responsibility process

- NATRUE defines its Label Criteria through an independent Scientific Committee – which ingredients are or are not accepted, minimum and maximum thresholds guaranteeing maximum naturalness and minimum derived natural ingredients are set
- NATRUE Approved Certifiers – independent bodies in charge of certification activities (food, cosmetics, textile, sustainability standards etc.)
- IOAS – the Accreditation Body which inspects the certification bodies on a four-yearly cycle, making sure that the NATRUE Approved Certifiers are competent enough to perform NATRUE's certification activities.



## 4) Ensuring the maximum level of naturalness! 13 product categories

NATRUE sets different requirements according to product categories. A high standard cannot be achieved without such differentiation.

A simple comparison to illustrate this point is that it is extremely easy to produce body oil which is 90-100% natural but what about shampoos? A typical shampoo cannot be produced without surfactants.

Surfactants are generally considered derived natural ingredients; in a very basic shampoo they can account for up to one third of formulation – with over 50 % of the formulation being water. A simple addition will immediately confirm that unmodified natural ingredients cannot account for more than a very small proportion of the total product.

How can anyone in all honesty pretend that a shampoo and body oil have the same level of guaranteed natural ingredients? Impossible, since the realistic requirements for natural ingredients in a shampoo would be unacceptably low compared with that possible, and expected for, a body oil.

**By dividing the spectrum of cosmetics into 13 categories the maximum naturalness of each product is guaranteed. No other standard has such a fine-tuned classification.**

## 5) It can't be organic without being natural first 3 levels of certification

### Natural cosmetics

This level is the foundation of the NATRUE Label; it defines which ingredients are permitted and how they may be processed. Products belonging to the two other levels need to fulfil the criteria of this level first. Per product type, there is a guaranteed threshold for natural ingredients and a cut-off level for derived natural substances. Many products certified to this level contain organic ingredients which is not a requirement of the standard but a company choice.

### Natural cosmetics with organic portion

All the above mentioned conditions apply but at least 70% of natural\* ingredients must stem from controlled organic production and/or controlled wild collection. Compared to the first level, we require higher levels of natural ingredients and lower levels of derived natural ingredients.

### Organic cosmetics

Both of the above mentioned conditions must apply with at least 95% of natural\* ingredients stemming from controlled organic production and/or controlled wild collection. Compared to the second level, we require even higher levels of natural ingredients and even lower levels of derived natural ingredients.

*\*and/or derived natural, where applicable*

## 6) Operating in the consumers' interest Not for profit

NATRUE is an international non-profit association registered under Belgian law. In order to support our organisational costs, we have two main sources of income – the Member's Fee and the NATRUE Label Fee. Members of NATRUE contribute to the association according to the provisions of the Statutes of the Association.

All companies carrying the NATRUE Label pay a minimum seal Fee – [a small biannual contribution for the use of the seal](#). The seal fee contributes towards the administrative costs of running the label, maintaining the website which promotes certified products via the product database and helps NATRUE promote the standard and quality of the products certified to it.