

## True Stories

### The success of the All-One soap: Dr. Bronner's



Photo: Axel Rungweber/Dr. Bronner's Europe

#### **Axel Rungweber, Managing Director at Dr. Bronner's Europe**

*Axel Rungweber is Managing Director at Dr. Bronner's Europe since 2011. Axel is a lawyer who specialised on corporate responsibility during his studies at Harvard Business School. Before joining Dr. Bronner's Europe, he founded the organization "Ideas of Hope", which promotes efficient CSR activities by bringing together the social interests of European partners and the urgent need for financial support in different parts of the world.*

*Dr. Bronner's is the top-selling soap in the US natural cosmetics marketplace. It is a family-owned and run business that is known for its certified organic and Fairtrade natural soaps and personal care products. Dr. Bronner's business strategy focuses on three pillars: corporate responsibility, sustainable agriculture and animal welfare.*

#### **NATRUE: When was Dr. Bronner's created? What are the values of this brand?**

Axel Rungweber: Dr. Bronner's was founded in 1948 by Emanuel Bronner, a third-generation master soap maker from a German-Jewish soapmaking family. He used the labels on his natural soaps to spread a message of unity across religious and ethical differences: "We are All-One or None!". Based in Southern California and distributed in more than 40 countries worldwide, Dr. Bronner's honours to this day the vision of its founder by continuing to make socially and environmentally responsible products of the highest quality, and by dedicating all profits not needed for business to progressive causes and charities.

#### **NATRUE: What is special about Dr. Bronner's products?**

Axel Rungweber: Dr. Bronner's uses traditional methods to create plant-based and biodegradable personal care products that are free from synthetic preservatives, petrochemicals, synthetic foaming agents or thickeners. The products are certified according to the strictest criteria within the natural cosmetics industry. Our multi-use liquid soaps can be used for body, hair, face, mouth and teeth, but also to do the dishes, your laundry and even wash your pets! They are also three times more concentrated than most liquid soaps on the market, which means more soap per bottle and less waste in packaging materials. Regarding its packaging, Dr. Bronner's exclusively uses 100% post-consumer recycled (PCR) PET bottles for all our liquid soaps. We have been using 100% PCR PET bottles for more than ten years, long before this was common in the personal care industry.

#### **NATRUE: What are the "star ingredients" of Dr. Bronner's products? Where do these ingredients come from?**

Axel Rungweber: Only the purest organic and Fairtrade ingredients are used to produce Dr. Bronner's products. As a company that has built in sustainability throughout its whole supply chain, Dr. Bronner's

sources most of the raw materials for its products from certified organic Fairtrade projects around the world, supporting thousands of smallholder farmers from Ghana (palm oil), Palestine and Israel (olive oil) and Sri Lanka (coconut oil), among others. Dr. Bronner's works directly with farmers to increase their knowledge and skills in order to support the implementation of regenerative organic agriculture practices to increase soil fertility, revitalize farming communities and sequester carbon from the atmosphere.

**NATRUE: How is Dr. Bronner's adapting to the new trends and consumer demands in the natural and organic cosmetics sector?**

Axel Rungweber: At Dr. Bronner's we closely monitor trends while ensuring to keep honouring and respecting our founder's tradition and ideas. The same applies to the packaging design. Emanuel printed his theses for a world of equality and peace, the so-called Moral ABC, on the labels of his liquid soaps - where you can still read them to this day. We are therefore pleased to see that consumer demands are increasingly converging with our core convictions and corporate values. The increasing demand for natural and organic cosmetics shows us that it is worthwhile and important to develop socially and environmentally responsible products of the highest quality. Most importantly, Dr. Bronner's is pioneering new trends, such as regenerative agriculture, thus contributing to setting new standards for the organic cosmetics segment.

**NATRUE: How do you perceive the role of NATRUE in the natural and organic cosmetic sector?**

Axel Rungweber: We are fighting to have a market where consumers are not misled and where organic standards are applied to personal care products in the same way as to food. In this respect, certification by private standards such as NATRUE's one plays a key role. The NATRUE Label guarantees that our products meet the highest standards in terms of the quality of our raw materials and their careful processing. NATRUE protects and promotes organic and natural cosmetics worldwide and thus ensures that the high-quality standards that Dr. Bronner's stands for since its foundation are not diluted. The NATRUE Label also assists us with the communication of our product quality and standards to our customers in a transparent and comprehensible way. After all, by helping consumers to distinguish genuine organic cosmetic products from others, labels like NATRUE's one stand for trust and reliability, which translates into easier purchasing decisions for consumers.



For more information about Dr. Bronner's, visit [www.drbronner.com](http://www.drbronner.com)

**About NATRUE:**

NATRUE is an international non-profit organisation located in Brussels. It has promoted and protected authentic natural and organic cosmetics since 2007. The NATRUE Label sets a high standard which guarantees quality and integrity so consumers worldwide may identify and enjoy natural and organic cosmetics truly worthy of that name. Currently over 6,700 products from more than 300 brands and more than 400 raw materials carry the NATRUE Label. Products, raw materials and brands are listed on the publicly accessible database in our website: [www.natrue.org](http://www.natrue.org).