



True Stories

'Set to fair from head to toe': meet Fair Squared GmbH

Oliver Gothe, Managing Director of Fair Squared GmbH

Oliver studied Economics in Cologne and started his career with opening a condom shop in 1988. This company "condomi" became largest condom manufacturer in Europe. In 2005 he sold his condomi shares and started as a Fairtrade entrepreneur. Oliver has been active in the organic industry since 2012. First in the development and marketing of natural cosmetics, later also for certified organic food, household and hygiene products.



NATRUE: How and when was your brand founded?

Oliver: FAIR SQUARED is an alternative trade organization with the goal of reducing the imbalance in global trade. Our company idea stems from Oxfam's "Make poverty history" campaign in 2005. Why? Because in 2005 there was no cosmetics with fairly traded ingredients available. So Fair Squared became Pioneer in the field. In 2010, the first FAIR SQUARED products were distributed in England through OXFAM and Amnesty International. Since 2014, throughout Europe.

NATRUE: Why is your brand actually "fair" and what is behind the name?

Oliver: Translated, FAIR SQUARED simply means FAIR², which means FAIR squared. We proudly carry the word "fair" in our name - even back then, when no one really knew what sustainable trade and fair products were all about. We do not emulate a trend, we live it for over 12 years!

Fair trade relations, ecological responsibility and a consequent no to child labor and animal testing - fairness takes place for us on all levels. What else belongs to FAIR SQUARED for us? A multicultural, committed team with the ambition to make the world a little bit better. We combine not only these, but also other wonderful skills in one company and are proud that such charming people as our employees are working together for a good cause.

NATRUE: How many product lines do you have? Where do these products come from?

Oliver: True to the motto "set to fair from head to toe", you will find everything you need for your daily care routines in our product range. Natural cosmetics for the face, the hair, the entire body: FAIR SQUARED combines plastic-free and vegan natural cosmetics with high-quality ingredients.

We break this down into a total of six product lines:

1. Face
2. Hair
3. Body Care
4. Feet & Hands
5. Intimate & Wellbeing
6. Health

Based on Fairtrade certified raw materials, our formulations are deliberately simple and contain only ingredients that the skin or hair really need. For example, we use olive oil from Palestine, coconut oil from Sri Lanka, argan oil from Morocco or shea butter from Ghana. The fourteen different Fairtrade-certified raw materials from all over the world are then completed and filled into cosmetic products in Germany.

NATRUE: As far as we know, you develop between five and eight new products every six months. How is that possible?

Oliver: The formulas are not rocket science, but proven standards. It is more difficult to find the right Fairtrade raw materials on a permanent basis and in sufficient quantities. Although we are very happy to develop new products, we have almost reached the final product range for the Fair Squared brand. In today's global political situation, further differentiation of the product range is no longer an option. However, we will want to set new accents in the area of packaging for the brand in the future.

NATRUE: Only 9% of the plastic waste generated worldwide is recycled. One of your mottos is 'Zero Waste'. How can you ensure that?

Oliver: Our packaging materials are almost exclusively made of recyclable materials. It was a big concern for us to become plastic-free 4 years ago. So, as a first step, we replaced our plastic containers with glass. For the EPE inserts in the jars, we had to develop our own inserts made of natural rubber, which have now been successfully in use for 3 years. We have been offering our customers a recycling system for more than 2 years, whereby we take back our jars and reuse them again. We are currently happy with 2.5% of glasses coming back to us.

We have also developed a special "Cosmetainer" for our Unverpackt customers ('non-packaging stores'). 'Cosmetainers' are stores for plastic-free shopping where our cosmetics can also be sold "loose". As a member of the Unverpackt Verband e.V., as well as the recently founded Deutscher Mehrwegverband e.V., we are always relatively close to the topic.

NATRUE: What would you say to brands that want to join NATRUE?

Oliver: We believe that due to the now widespread use of the NATRUE label and the resulting high level of awareness, many consumers also make their purchasing decisions in favor of NATRUE-marked products. In any case, it quickly creates clarity for consumers as to which values in terms of certified natural cosmetics a product labeled with NATRUE stands for. This trust advantage should certainly justify the (not always inexpensive) certification costs and NATRUE fees, especially for smaller companies.



For more information about Fair Squared, visit www.fairsquared.com