



# ORGANIC BYTES

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## Consumer Alert: Cancer-Causing Ingredient Found in Leading "Organic" and "Natural" Personal Care Products

A newly released study commissioned by the Organic Consumers Association (OCA) and overseen by environmental health consumer advocate David Steinman (author of *The Safe Shopper's Bible*), revealed the presence of the undisclosed carcinogenic contaminant 1,4-Dioxane in leading shampoos, body washes, lotions and other personal care and household cleaning products claiming to be "natural" or "organic".

The study results, to be released March 14th at the Natural Products Expo in California, are already sending shockwaves through the "organic" and "natural" body care industry. Laboratory tests showed that products certified under the USDA National Organic Program *did not* contain this toxin, but most of the best selling personal care products claiming to be "organic" (but not USDA certified) contained the cancer-causing ingredient.

All leading self-proclaimed "organic" brands have at least a few individual "certified organic" ingredients, but for most of these top-selling brands, the product, as a whole, is not USDA organic certified, thereby allowing the presence of synthetic toxins. Similar studies have revealed the presence of this toxin in conventional personal care products, but this is the first study indicating the presence in misleadingly labeled "organic" and "natural" products.

[www.organicconsumers.org/comingclean.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/comingclean.cfm)



### HOW TO AVOID 1,4-DIOXANE IN YOUR PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

Some of the products found to contain 1,4-Dioxane:

- ▶ JASON Pure Natural & Organic
- ▶ Giovanni Organic Cosmetics
- ▶ Kiss My Face
- ▶ Nature's Gate Organic

See a full list of OCA's study results at: [www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/DioxaneResults08.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/DioxaneResults08.cfm)

Remember that just because a personal care product labels itself with the words "organic" or "certified organic" doesn't mean it meets any specified organic standards.

Look for products that are certified under the USDA National Organic Program (or a similar German program) and products that bear the "USDA Organic" seal.

Search product labels for ingredients with the following in their names to avoid products containing 1,4-Dioxane: myreth, oleth, laureth, cetareth, any other eth, PEG, polyethylene, polyethylene glycol, polyoxyethylene, or oxynol.

In general, avoid products with unpronounceable ingredients to be sure to avoid synthetic toxins and carcinogens.

## Industry Ignores Consumer Concerns, Creates Bogus "Oasis" Organic Standard

A new "organic" standard for personal care products has been created exclusively by conventional industry members like Estee Lauder (owner of Aveda), L'Oreal and Hain (Jason, Avalon), without any input or comment period from organic consumers, organic farmers or personal care companies who have achieved USDA National Organic Program certification for the majority of their products. The OASIS standard allows a product to be labeled outright as "Organic" (rather than "Made with Organic Specified Ingredients") even if it contains hydrogenated and sulfated cleansing ingredients like Sodium Lauryl Sulfate made from conventional agricultural material grown with synthetic fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, and preserved with synthetic petrochemical preservatives like Ethylhexylglycerin and Phenoxyethanol. As always, the OCA recommends consumers look for personal care products certified under the USDA National Organic Program. Learn more:

[www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_10886.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_10886.cfm)

## Ronnie Cummins on How to Solve America's Health Care Crisis

The health care crisis in the US is fast becoming a life or death emergency. OCA Director Ronnie Cummins exposes the real roots of this crisis and lays out what we can do about it in his latest article: "Beyond Progressive Malpractice: Taking Down Big Pharma." Read the article and press the politicians on this burning issue: [www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_10838.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_10838.cfm)

**ALERT****Farm Workers & Animal Rights Activists Lose Freedom of Speech**

Despite massive opposition from public interest groups and civil libertarians, the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, AETA, became law on November 27, 2007 upon receiving President Bush's signature. Its stated purpose is "to provide the Department of Justice the necessary authority to apprehend, prosecute, and convict individuals committing animal enterprise terror." But AETA is not limited to acts of violence or property destruction. It extends to anyone who attempts to, or conspires to, interfere with an animal enterprise. AETA offers no defense to activists who expose illegal activities. Animal researchers and factory farms that are operating illegally can use AETA to protect themselves from whistle blowers. The effect of AETA is to label social justice activists as terrorists when they work to expose animal cruelty, poor labor conditions, or environmental violations in agribusiness or the biomedical industries. It's time to repeal AETA. [www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_10859.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_10859.cfm)

**The Great Pacific Garbage Patch**

The University of Hawaii is set to launch an expedition with the goal of confirming a new trash "continent" in the Pacific Ocean. A vast expanse of floating trash has been collecting in the Pacific Ocean into a mass that scientists are now referring to as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. The thick mass of plastic soup, located approximately 500 miles east of California, is now reported to be twice the size of the United States. The collection of debris comes as no surprise to experts in this area. According to a recent report from the UN Environment Programme, on a global level, each square mile of ocean water contains an average of 46,000 pieces of floating garbage. [www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_10831.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_10831.cfm)

**BOOK OF THE WEEK****THE WAR ON BUGS**

Will Allen, an OCA Advisor, has written a new book that is certain to become an essential tool for consumers and activists, alike. According to a review in *The Times Argus*: "This is not just a book about popular desserts and their hidden dangers. It is a well-crafted, thoroughly researched literary polemic against the chemical companies and their customers (the farmers) who, by means of advertising, propaganda and other marketing techniques, have lulled consumers into unwittingly purchasing all kinds of farm produce that has been treated with often-dangerous insecticides. In fact, *The War On Bugs* is also a truly fascinating history of agriculture not only here in the United States but elsewhere, and it is generously illustrated with documents that portray not just the progress of agriculture but the often-hidden costs associated with that progress." The book can be ordered online at: [www.chelseagreen.com/2007/items/waronbugs](http://www.chelseagreen.com/2007/items/waronbugs)

**Quote of the Week:  
GE Fish Escape Into the Wild**

"The result of these weaknesses is that the extent of research under way in Canada and any accidental release of (genetically engineered) fish may not be fully known." -*Statement in a Canadian Government Audit released this week that reveals lax regulations have allowed untold numbers of experimental Frankenfish to escape unreported into natural waterways.* [www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_10823.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_10823.cfm)

**Community Supported Agriculture**

The eco-buff's mantra of "buy local" is never quite as easy, tasty or rewarding as during growing season in the Northern Hemisphere. As we prepare for spring to roll into North America, a growing number of farmers are finding support from members of their local communities who are paying for their fair share of the year's harvest via a "subscription" method known as **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)**. There's no easier way to buy local and organic than to find a CSA near you. For a modest subscription fee, you get a variety of locally grown fruits and vegetables brought to your home weekly. [www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_10790.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_10790.cfm)

**A Closer Look at Chinese Organics**

More companies are importing organic products from China and other countries. But contaminated pet food, tainted toothpaste, and unauthorized antibiotics in fish have been imported to the US from China. Now, some people are concerned about organic foods from China. Listen to an informative webcast to learn how this issue affects US consumers at:

[www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_10805.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_10805.cfm)

We need your support today to continue to our work fighting for the rights of organic farmers and organic consumers!

[www.organicconsumers.org/donations.htm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/donations.htm)

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6771 S. Silver Hill Drive · Finland, MN 55603

218-353-7454 · 218-353-7652 fax

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