Is organic the best?

While there are many skincare products labeled organic, industry guidelines are still a work in progress.

Gladys Chung

Walk into any beauty department or peruse any online and you’ll see an array of products proudly wearing the label “organic.” But what exactly does “organic” mean? There are no clear-cut guidelines as to what makes a product organic. It depends on the country and the governing body. In the U.S., the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) considers a product organic if it is from an organic farm and is processed without the use of synthetic chemicals.

But what about products that are labeled organic in other countries? In Australia, for example, a product can only be labeled organic if it is grown, manufactured, processed, handled, and packed under conditions specified by the Australian Certified Organic Standards. In the EU, a product can be labeled organic if it is produced according to specific organic farming standards.

“Organic” can mean different things in different countries, and even for the same country, different bodies may have different definitions. This can make it difficult for consumers to understand what they are buying and where it fits into the wider context of sustainability and environmental impact.

Some countries, such as the U.S., have stricter guidelines than others. For example, in the U.S., a product can only be labeled organic if it is produced in accordance with organic farming practices, which are outlined in the National Organic Program (NOP) regulations. These regulations are administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Organic labeling can also be confusing because it’s not just about the product itself. It’s about the entire supply chain, from farm to table to shelf. This includes the type of farming practices used, the sourcing of ingredients, and the processing methods employed.

The USDA has recently proposed new regulations to clarify the labeling of organic products. These regulations would require that all organic products be labeled as “Certified Organic” or “Organic.” This would help consumers understand the differences between organic and non-organic products, and make it easier to choose products that align with their values and beliefs.

Despite these challenges, there is a growing movement towards organic and sustainable practices in the beauty and health industry. This is a positive development, as it can help to reduce the environmental impact of beauty products and create a more sustainable future.

For more information on organic and sustainable beauty products, check out the USDA’s National Organic Program website or the Organic Trade Association’s website. These are great resources for learning more about the industry and making informed choices.

1. The Organic Pharmacy

   2. fdw

   3. Alaffia

   4. Dr. Bronner’s

   5. L’Occitane

   6. Earth’s Pure

   7. Leaping Bunny

   8. Ere Perez

   9. Neal’s Yard

   10. Organic Harvest

Organic and natural—what you need to know

There is an ongoing debate about the relationship between organic and natural. Organic is a term regulated by the USDA and other global authorities, while natural is a term that can be used by companies to describe their products. It’s important to note that not all natural products are organic, but all organic products are natural.

Organic products are produced from organic plants or animals and do not contain synthetic chemicals. Natural products, on the other hand, can contain synthetic chemicals, but the levels of these chemicals are lower than in organic products.

Organic products are also required to be produced under specific conditions, such as organic farming practices. Natural products, on the other hand, do not have to be produced under these conditions.

It’s important to note that these terms are not always used correctly or consistently. Companies may use these terms to describe their products, but it’s up to the consumer to do their own research and make informed choices.

For more information on organic and natural beauty products, check out the USDA’s National Organic Program website or the Organic Trade Association’s website.