

# the vivid green shopper

how to make actively healthy purchases for your family and planet

## does green cost more?

While parents should expect to pay more for high quality organic ingredients, in the long run, they shouldn't have to pay a premium for green manufacturing. The cost of using the best quality, organic ingredients is always higher than fillers and ingredients with toxic byproducts. The cost for a manufacturer to convert to green production practices can be high in the beginning, but those up-front expenses are recouped and eventually the company can see savings over time. For example, using alternative energy, like solar power, in production can save up to \$1 million per year on electricity. This cost savings can be reflected in the price a you pay for a product that helps you contribute to the health of the planet.



## what does green look like?

Parents with green values should know that not all companies who *look* green truly *are* green. Some manufacturers simply "greenwash" their products: they have some trendy eco-terminology on the label and come with a premium price tag. Maybe these companies have adopted some green manufacturing standards - but that doesn't mean these products benefit the environment. Check out the list of ingredients - if it is loaded with synthetic chemicals and fragrance, it probably isn't good for you or the planet. So, be vigilant and make your dollars count; support companies that truly advocate for the planet in spirit and action.



## what is green value?

Green products leave a smaller footprint on the environment, and green *value* is obtained by purchasing fairly priced products that not only support the protection of our planet, they support the health of our families, and our babies bodies - both directly with organic and healthy ingredients, and indirectly by using fewer fossil fuels, less disposable packaging, and more sustainable business practices. The good news is that due to consumer demand for green value, more manufacturers are making a commitment to the Vivid Green Generation™.



## how can you identify green?

Natural materials are the minimum level of commitment you should expect from a company making green claims. The list to the right offers guidance on Vivid Green buying.

## vivid green buying:

- **Find Recycled, Reusable, and Minimal Packaging!** Excessive packaging adds unnecessary cost and is terrible for our planet. Look for products that use recycled, recyclable or certified sustainable (e.g., FSC) packaging, or boxes and plastics that are durable enough to reuse.
- **Avoid Fragrances!** The word "fragrance" in personal care products can indicate upwards of 4000 chemicals that are not required to be listed on an ingredient label. Synthetic fragrances are used to make goods such as fabrics and cleaning supplies smell more "appealing". These fragrances are usually generated with a mix of chemicals including benzene, ammonia, ethylene glycol, and other petroleum based synthetics that are known toxins and carcinogens.
- **Look for High Levels of Organics!** Many common ingredients have pesticide/fungicide residues, which can be absorbed by the body. Organic ingredients are naturally more potent antioxidants - as much as 30% more - which means the free radicals our bodies are exposed to (and produce) are offset better and faster by choosing organic ingredients.
- **Ask About Alternative Energy & Paperless Operations!** Companies pushing for and using solar or wind power, and using paperless protocols for invoicing, marketing, and communications are proactively helping to preserve our resources, our health, and the beauty of our planet.
- **Avoid Petrochemicals!** Mineral oil, petroleum jelly, and paraffin wax are examples of petrochemicals. The production and disposal of these ingredients is damaging to our environment and they may contain toxic byproducts like 1-4 dioxane.
- **Soy & Vegetable Based Inks!** Inks and dyes made from "D&C pigments," have synthetic coloring agents made from coal tar. Most of them are carcinogenic. Products made with D&C pigments contain heavy metal salts, which can be absorbed through skin to cause organ sensitivity and irritation. They are also found in the earth and water after they have been disposed of, where they can remain for decades as a source of toxic pollution.
- **Look for Locally Made!** Imported products require massive amounts of fossil fuels adding to the cost of goods that are frequently no better than what you can find locally. U.S. policies regarding heavy metals and other toxins are not internationally recognized or enforced.
- **Buy Low/No VOC Painted Products!** Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) are emitted from paint and pressboard as gasses that can harm eyes, nose, throat, liver, kidneys, and cause nausea, headaches, and loss of coordination. Common VOCs include formaldehyde, ammonia, and acetone. High VOC paint is the leading cause of indoor air pollution, which, in most homes, is worse than outdoor air pollution.
- **Choose Rubber Not Foam!** Foam is made from a petroleum by-product, which is not sustainable. It retains bacteria that feed on common fire-retardants and it off-gasses skin irritants and toxins that have been associated with nausea, dizziness, and respiratory irritation, and is even linked to SIDS. Rubber is a great natural alternative that is free from PVC, phthalates, chlorides, dioxins, and furans.
- **Seek Out Natural Materials!** Natural fabric materials like wool, cotton, silk, hemp, bamboo, and linen are better for the body because they are breathable and better for planet due to safer production and disposal. Rayon is a good synthetic choice because its from cellulose, not petrochemicals like polyester, acrylic and nylon.

