

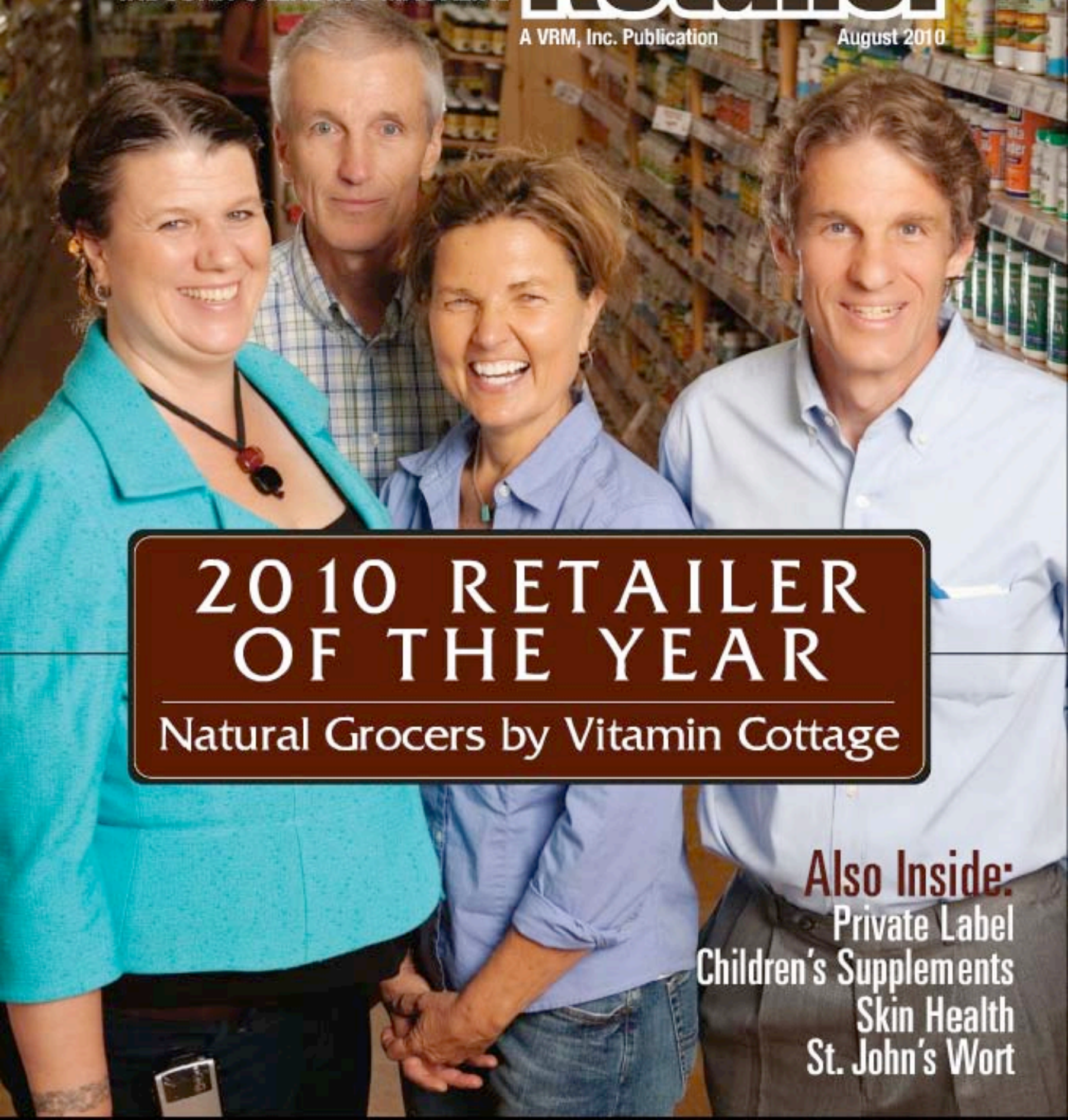
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Vitamin Retailer

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2010 RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Natural Grocers by Vitamin Cottage

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A Natural Shift in Skin Health

With an increase in user awareness as well as an improvement in product effectiveness, retailers have found that a natural movement has begun to take place among consumers in the skin care market. ■ By Rajiv Leventhal

Natural and organic skin care products are becoming trendier by the day, as Americans are taking a more cautious and healthier approach when it comes to their largest organ—the skin. Recent reports state that the US natural and organic personal care market has been outpacing the growth of most other health and beauty industries in the US for the past two years, and is projected to continue to do so in the upcoming years.

"The more consumers that transition into a natural, healthy lifestyle with conscious and educated choices about the food they put into their mouths, the more they will identify with natural ingredients and be concerned about the personal care products that are applied and absorbed through their skin," said Dr. Linda Miles LAc, DOM and vice president of derma e® Natural Bodycare (Simi Valley, CA). "Additionally, because of the research on natural ingredients and the media's frequent mentions regarding their skin benefits, consumers are becoming more aware and looking for products incorporating these elements."

Recent Skin Health Trends

Sales continue to surge upward in the natural skin care market, as consumers are becoming more cognizant about the dangers of mistreating their skin. According to researcher Mintel, 842 new natural personal care products were introduced in 2007, and research from Natural Marketing Institute (NMI) shows that sales of natural and organic personal care products totaled \$7.8 billion in that year, representing a double-digit growth from 2006. NMI expects the natural and organic personal care

market to continue at this pace for several years.

"As consumers become more environmentally aware, they seek alternative skin care methods and products that enhance their natural beauty—inside and out," said Kaitlyn Hastings, public relations specialist with Reserveage Organics (Gainesville, FL). "The organic skin care market is continuing to grow as 'going green' gains in popularity. These consumers are characterized by a deep dedication to the environment and a devotion to quality ingredients that enhance their overall well being. Sales are up."

Kim Grustas, owner and founder of Good For You Girls (New Hartford, CT), which targets girls aged 9-14 years, also said that sales are increasing, despite the higher costs of natural products. "I think the trend is quality and brand loyalty. I believe price has some bearing on purchase, but I think when it comes to quality and effectiveness (especially in skin care), consumers will not trade it for a lower price."

Skin creams, lotions and washes are popular with the younger generation, but they aren't the only products that are trendy on the skin care market. Teas have been gaining momentum as well, according to Karta Purkh Singh Khalsa, herbalist for Yogi (Eugene, OR). Yogi Skin Detox Tea is one example and is made with organic green tea, which is long recognized for promoting healthy skin. "With increased awareness of skin as a living, breathing part of the body, consumers are increasingly looking for natural solutions

for their daily beauty regimen," Khalsa said. "Knowing that what you put on your skin is absorbed into your body, and similarly, what you digest affects your skin, people are thinking in a more holistic way about their skin care."

Products and Ingredients

When trying to achieve healthier skin, there is hardly a shortage of products that are available on the market. The hard part, though, is finding the right one that fits each customer's needs. derma e's Miles said that it is "essential that the natural ingredients in skin care products are known for, or scientifically proven to help benefit skin topically." She explained that there are several natural ingredients that benefit the skin, such as:

- Pycnogenol®: Fifty times more powerful than vitamin E and 20 times more powerful than vitamin C in neutralizing free radicals. This nutrient from the bark of the French maritime pine stabilizes the capillary system, increasing the skin's resistance to inflammation



and supporting healthy microcirculation.

- **Astaxanthin:** The most powerful antioxidant yet discovered is 500 times more powerful than vitamin E. Harvested from micro-algae, astaxanthin has the amazing ability to shut down free radicals and protect the skin from UV damage (1,000 times more effective than both beta-carotene and lutein in protecting skin from exposure to UV light) and environmental stress. This nutrient reduces skin inflammation, helps normalize skin and enhances the activity of defensive cells.

- **Hyaluronic acid:** A naturally occurring substance in the body, hyaluronic acid (HA) is one of the most effective moisturizing agents available, holding up to 1,000 times its weight in water. Its hydrating properties restore skin's moisture levels, plumps and smoothes, resulting in firmer, more youthful looking skin. It delivers maximum moisture and helps support collagen and elastin health, while diminishing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

- **Ester-C®:** The first patented form of vitamin C, it is an effective antioxidant that stays stable and has been shown to penetrate the dermis for maximum results. Bio-available Ester-C helps protect skin from free-radical damage, promote even pigmentation and helps stimulate collagen and elastin production for firmer skin.

- **Green tea:** Green tea contains high-antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties to help slow the signs of aging. Because it is rich in polyphenols, it also helps fight free radicals, prevents oxidative stress, protects skin from UVA and UVB radiation damage and reduces the number of sunburn cells.

The green tea is evident in Yogi's Skin DeTox tea, which "is designed for people who want to take a proactive, natural approach to skin care," said Yogi's Khalsa. "Herbs, such as those in Skin DeTox, can



detoxify the body and support the skin by helping people cleanse their bodies of toxins that can cause skin inflammation."

Reserveage Organics' Collagen Booster works in another way, as it hydroplenishes and moisturizes the skin to promote elasticity and firmness while smoothing lines and wrinkles.

Consumers can overcome visible signs of aging with an exclusive blend of resveratrol and BioCell Collagen II, which blend synergistically to reveal the soft, smooth, silky complexion of youth, according to Reserveage's Hastings.

Marketing Tactics

Retailers are always looking to increase sales, and the trend is strengthening: the natural skin care market is growing in popularity, and companies are selling their products with much more ease than previously.

"As consumers become more environ-

mentally aware, they seek alternative skin care methods and products that enhance their natural beauty—inside and out," said Hastings. "By using natural skin care products, the consumer knows they are receiving the most potent and pure product available, with no added chemicals or contaminants."

While safety seems to be the most prevalent reason for using natural products, there does seem to be an ongoing concern regarding their overall effectiveness and strength. But Miles quickly dismissed any skepticism that has arisen. "Consumers are under the impression that natural is not as powerful. We truly believe this is not the case. Natural ingredients are made up of a multitude of active subcomponents that cannot be recreated with synthetic ingredients. Choosing natural skin care is the best choice." **VR**

For More Information:

- derma e® Natural Bodycare, (800) 521-3342
- Good For You Girls, (860) 489-9912
- Reserveage Organics, (800) 553-1896
- Yogi, (800) 964-4832

