

# Never mind the larder, how healthy is your wardrobe?

**I** use common sense when helping clients to choose household and personal care items, underwear, leisurewear, plus infant, children and maternity wear. These items need to be free from petrochemicals, artificial fragrances and colorants – and definitely not tested on animals.

Cotton farmers use huge amounts of agrochemicals. Up to 25 per cent of the world's total annual production of pesticides and 10 per cent of all herbicides are used to treat cotton. In some countries, the crop is sprayed 30 or 40 times. Most yarn or fabric is bleached with sodium hypochlorite, hydrogen peroxide or chlorine and then dyed.

The belief that skin is an efficient barrier to external substances entering the body was challenged in the Sixties when the drug dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) was shown to transport substances through the skin and into the blood.

The ability of many chemicals to be absorbed through the skin is now widely accepted. In some cases it is used for



medication. Drugs such as nicotine and female hormones are routinely administered as a skin patch.

Most substances can be absorbed through the skin, and up to 60 per cent of any substance may enter the body this way.

Here are some of my favourite new products by people who are reinvesting profits into Fairtrade and the preservation of the environment:

**Tatty bumpkin:** Organic Fairtrade cotton and bamboo clothing, toys, bags for kids – cost-effective and stylish. ([www.tattybumpkin.com](http://www.tattybumpkin.com)).

Check out Bamboo clothing and textiles ([www.superiorbamboo.co.uk](http://www.superiorbamboo.co.uk)) and Ciel organic for its beautifully designed, silk-

soft knits, leisure and underwear. ([www.ciel.ltd.uk](http://www.ciel.ltd.uk)).

Not only does the softness and high absorbency of bamboo make it a fantastic textile but its strength, durability and light weight make it ideal for kitchen and tablewear.

Bambu is the only brand to offer certified organic bamboo kitchen products. ([www.bambuhome.com](http://www.bambuhome.com)).

Oleanat's bio-nourishing lip balm has no horrid-tasting flavour, but all the 'free from' credentials, and uses Europe's first 100 per cent compostable casing instead of plastic. ([www.essenceoffrance.co.uk](http://www.essenceoffrance.co.uk)).

**Trillium body polishes:** I have tried and tested every body exfoliant product on the market. In my opinion this outshines them all. ([www.trilliumorganics.com](http://www.trilliumorganics.com)).

Mandala aroma is the first range of aromatherapy products (bath and body oils and candles) to really impress me. ([www.mandala-aroma.com](http://www.mandala-aroma.com)).

Live Native produces the purest skin food range that I think challenges the likes of Elizabeth Arden's 8-hour cream ([www.livenative.com](http://www.livenative.com)).