



Beauty Products & Hidden Animal Ingredients

Ginger Burr

The more we explore the concept of being vegan and look at where we can make a difference by changing our habits, the more we discover the

places that animal ingredients are hidden—some in plain sight and some not so much. An egg is obvious, but seeing cera alba (beeswax) on your lipstick label might not immediately register as nonvegan.

While it's impossible to be absolute in avoiding all animal ingredients (they're in everything from baseballs and asphalt to car tires and drywall), the more aware we become, the more animals we will spare. And don't be fooled by companies that advertise their products as cruelty-free because they do not test on animals. They could still include animal ingredients invalidating their cruelty-free assessment.

Even now, after eleven years of being vegan, I still occasionally find an ingredient that surprises me. Just recently I purchased toothpaste. I had read the label, but to my dismay, when I looked deeper, I discovered it was not vegan-friendly. Many personal care products contain animal ingredients couched in scientific terms that make them difficult to uncover. To help you avoid the pitfalls I have experienced, here are five ingredients to avoid:

Propolis: This was in the toothpaste I purchased. It's a substance that comes from poplar trees and is added to toothpaste to soothe irritation. Bees collect it to seal their honeycombs, and it is generally acquired directly from the beehives.

Glycerin: This one is tricky. It's an ingredient in shampoo that adds moisture to your hair, but it can be sourced from either animals or plants, and the label doesn't always tell you which one. I recently contacted a shampoo company to find out what type of glycerin they use (I was happy it was vegetable sourced.), so a quick phone call can often get you the answer you need.

Keratin: This term is thrown around liberally in the beauty industry, especially when it comes to hair products. Keratin protein is touted by the beauty industry as a must-have treatment for women who want straight, shiny hair, but as benign as a 'keratin treatment' sounds, it is sourced from animals (hooves, horns, and feathers).

Makeup Brushes: When we look at our makeup brushes we generally see a means to apply our makeup, not necessarily the source of the bristles. While most foundation, concealer, and lip brushes have synthetic bristles, most powder, blush, and eyeshadow brushes are made from animal hairs including squirrel, pony, sable, goat, and even mink. When I first went vegan this was a big aha moment for me—I was a makeup artist and had collected a large number of makeup brushes. At that time there were not many alternatives (although I was diligent and found them), but now you can find beautiful, effective, synthetic makeup brushes everywhere.

Pearl Powder: Known as conchiorin powder, it comes from oysters, or for the more inexpensive version, the inside lining of the oyster shell. It has been used in Asia in skin care products for centuries for its supposed antiaging benefits, as well as adding luminosity to cosmetic powders, and for its whitening and strengthening properties in toothpaste.

Now that you know what to look for, simply reading the label will expose these hidden animal ingredients quickly and easily.

Ginger Burr runs Total Image Consultants in Boston MA and is the author of *That's So You!*

A great resource for continuing to learn about hidden animal ingredients is the book *Veganissimo A to Z* by Reuben Proctor and Lars Thomsen, 2013, 311pp 5¼x7 \$15.95, available from AVS.

Where did the *Dating Vegans* go?

The column that formerly appeared in *American Vegan* inspired the *Dating Vegans* book by Anne Dinshah. We encourage you to read the book, in print from AVS or as an e-book.

Real people provide insights, fifty-one suggestive recipes, philosophy, and how to get from the first date to forever. Great fun for vegans and nonvegans alike to read anywhere, savoring each bite, or loving it all as a one-night stand.

2012, 178pp 6x9" \$12.95

