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Is the Environmental Working Group Single-Handedly Changing the Face of Sunscreens?

GILSUM, NH; June 02, 2011 – For the fifth year in a row W.S. Badger’s natural, zinc oxide-based sunscreens are highly recommended by the Environmental Working Group (EWG)’s Sunscreen Guide. With more brands than ever offering mineral options one has to wonder: is the EWG redefining the sunscreen market?

Judging by the proliferation of mineral sunscreens on the store shelves, and a dramatic rise in sales – sunscreens containing some organic content making up 65% of sunscreen sales in 2010¹ – the answer seems to be a resounding ‘yes’.

The study released last week wades through 1,000+ sunscreen products jockeying for position in people’s beach bag, and rates each according to ingredients, UVA/UVB protection, and stability. Of the over 600 beach and sport sunscreens reviewed, the EWG only recommends about 20%. This is in stark contrast to the 2010 report, which only recommended about 8% of the sunscreens reviewed. Close to 90 brands including Neutrogena, Banana Boat and Aveeno now offer sunscreens with an active ingredient of zinc oxide and/or titanium dioxide, which suggests that there’s market share to be had.

Badger, which has been manufacturing zinc oxide sunscreens since 2004, saw incredible growth in their sunscreen sales last year, on the heels of the EWG report. Badger’s Director of Product Development, Rebecca Hamilton, elaborates: “We made a sunscreen to safely protect people, but at the time there was little demand for a natural, zinc oxide sunscreen. We made it for our diehard natural fans, not expecting that our simple organic sunscreen would have such broad appeal – we wanted to make the option there for those who were looking for it. But, to our great surprise and delight, sales for our sunscreen have grown tremendously since their launch.”

But did the EWG set the trend, or just respond to an evolving market?

“The EWG is responsible for bringing this information to a broader audience,” commented Badger’s Marketing Manager Jentri Provenzano. “I don’t know if they started the trend, but they certainly brought the dangers of certain sunscreen ingredients in front of the consumer, who then set the trend with their buying power. There’s no doubt that the EWG is a factor in the growing popularity of natural sunscreens.”

Badger is at the forefront of the natural sunscreen movement, and makes a full line of safe, mineral sunscreens for the whole family. The Badger sunscreen line includes **SPF30+ Lightly Scented, SPF30+ Unscented, SPF30+ Baby Sunscreen, SPF30+ Sunscreen and Anti-Bug Repellent, SPF30+ All-Season Face Stick, SPF15 Lightly Scented, and SPF15 Unscented Lip Balm Stick**. All of Badger sunscreens use Zinc Oxide in a base of certified organic ingredients.

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¹ According to SPINS, a market research and consulting firm for the Natural Products Industry (SPINSscan Natural, 52 Weeks Ending 2.19.11)