

## 44

## Find Alternatives to Animal Product Testing

At some point in our cultural history, somebody decided it was a good idea to test newly manufactured products on animals before use by humans. If the product caused illness or death in the animal, the manufacturer would start over, make a new prototype and test it on another animal. On and on until the test animals showed the desired reaction to the product. They then determined that their product was safe for use by humans.

Even to the untrained eye, the practice seems a little unfair to the animals. And, since laboratory animals differ from humans in their genetic makeup, do the tests have any validity? Not enough to convince the scientific community or any government body. There isn't a single country in the world that requires that household products or cosmetics be tested on a living being before marketing them to humans. There are laws requiring that such products be safe for

- Alternatives to Animal Testing: [www.allforanimals.com/alternatives1.htm](http://www.allforanimals.com/alternatives1.htm)
- American Anti-Vivisection Society: [www.aavs.org](http://www.aavs.org)
- The Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics: [www.leapingbunny.org](http://www.leapingbunny.org)
- Humane Society — product testing: [www.hsus.org/animals\\_in\\_research/animal\\_testing](http://www.hsus.org/animals_in_research/animal_testing)
- International Foundation for Ethical Research: [www.ifer.org](http://www.ifer.org)
- National Anti-Vivisection Society: [www.navs.org](http://www.navs.org)

**Having assessed the current degree of scientific knowledge, the company does not foresee any situation in which animal testing might be necessary in the future.**

— Spokesperson for Mary Kay

human use, but nowhere is it legislated that animals must be used for testing.

### Cruel and Inconclusive

Acute toxicity testing for consumer products began in the 1920s, and some of the same methods of testing on animals are used today, such as the LD50 test which measures the lethal dose (LD) at which 50% of a group of animals will die. Increasing amounts of a substance are administered through the mouth, nose or skin of test animals until it becomes fatal, in order to arrive at a “safe” level for human use. LD50 tests have been criticized for decades by animal welfare advocates and by people in the scientific community who recognize the ineffectiveness of the test, which research has shown to have just 65% accuracy when predicting toxicity in humans.<sup>1</sup> The rats, mice, guinea pigs and rabbits that are used in product testing are easily accessible and have no way to defend themselves from an inefficient and archaic practice that is still used only out of convenience. It's time for that to change.

### There Are Alternatives

Alternative methods of testing are becoming increasingly available:

- Tissue culture techniques are leading the way, as companies move from in-vivo (animal) testing to in-vitro (in glass) tissue testing.
- Eyetex and Skintex are in-vitro procedures that replicate conditions for human skin reactions and can measure the toxicity of over 5,000 different materials.

- Lab-grown cells and organs. Scientists are developing better cells and organs all the time, and they're already being used for cosmetics testing. EpiPack and Testskin are two such products.
- Improvements to testing methods. A woman no longer has to make a trip to a doctor to test for pregnancy, which has traditionally involved killing a rabbit or frog. A simple over-the-counter kit can be used to do a chemical analysis of her urine, and no animals have to die.
- Human clinical tests: medically monitored clinics where humans volunteer to test the effectiveness and safety of a product before it goes on the market.

### **A Greater Consciousness in Aesthetics**

In 1989 the cosmetics industry giant Mary Kay announced a moratorium on all animal testing until a review of animal testing practices was complete. Now they've announced that they've gone animal-testing-free forever.

Mary Kay is the largest cosmetics company to sign the Corporate Standard of Compassion

for Animals, a stringent internationally accepted standard established by the Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics.

The following companies have all opted out of testing on animals: The Body Shop, Beauty Works, Dr. Bronner's, Calder Valley Soap Company, Color My Image, Dead Sea Magic, French Transit, Kiss My Face, Maxim Marketing, Montagne Jeunesse, Pro-Tech Pet Health, Revlon, Tom's of Maine and Yardley.<sup>2</sup>



The internationally recognized Leaping Bunny logo, developed by The Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics, helps businesses verify their commitment to animal-free product testing.

## **Grape Juice That's Good for Everybody**

In 2006 Welch's, the company most famous for its grape juice, announced that they will no longer fund any animal experiments, previously done at three universities, to inflict health problems on animals before feeding them juice to determine its health benefits. Such practices are not required by law but are still used by other drink manufacturers.<sup>3</sup> Sunny Delight, Old Orchard, SunSweet, Tampico, Cascadian Farms, Newman's Own, Bolthouse Farms, Jamba Juice and Campbell's V8 juices are among many companies that have signed a statement of assurance for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, stating that their products do not involve testing on animals.<sup>4</sup>