

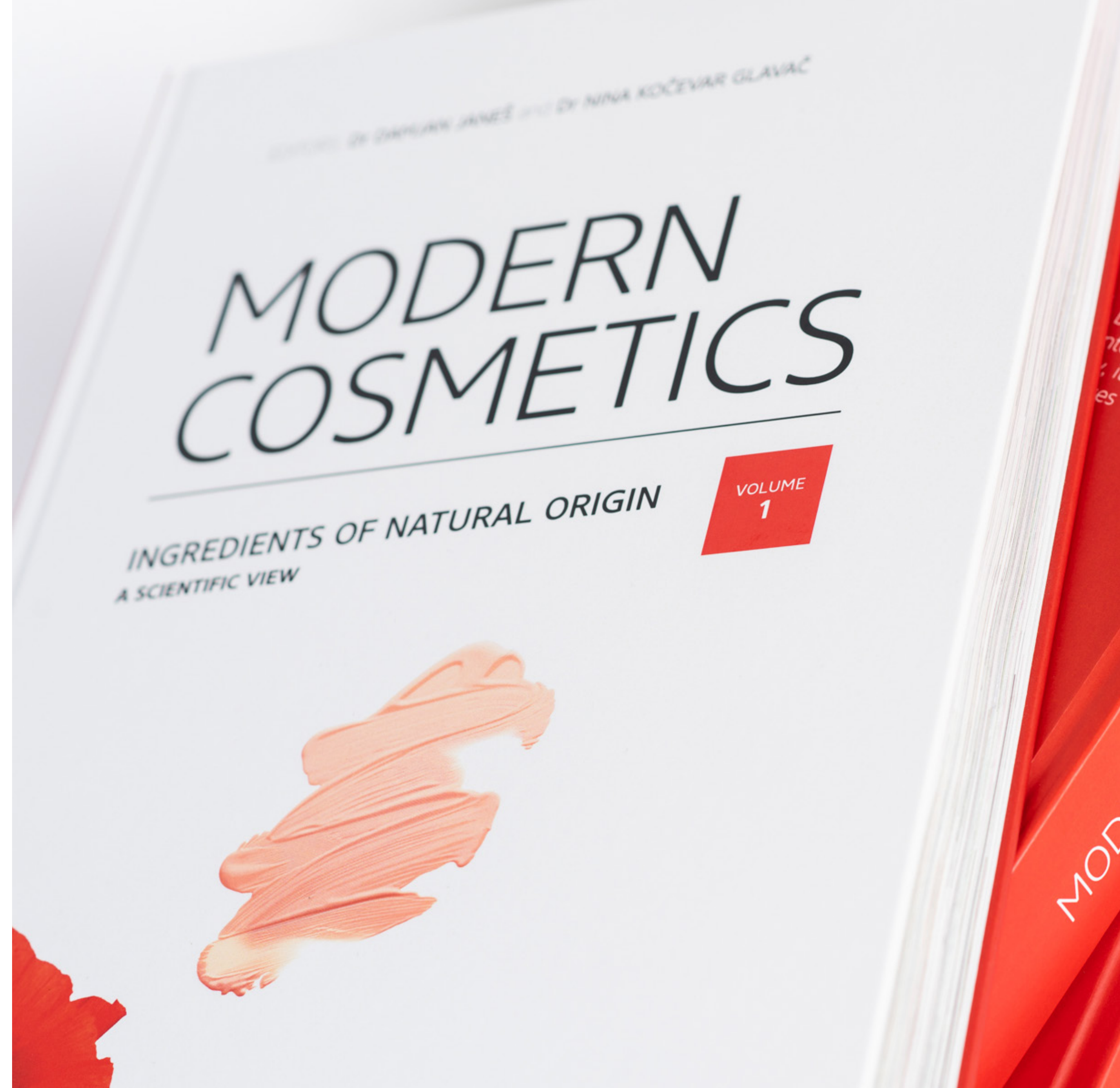
MODERN COSMETICS BOOK REVIEW



I feel quite privileged to have been contacted by the publishers of Modern Cosmetics – Ingredients of Natural Origin – A Scientific View for a sneak preview copy of it before it even hits the shelves a couple of weeks from now.

And even though it's flattering to experience oneself among ,a chosen few', it didn't stop me from making it clear I would only write about the book if I found it worthy of attention and praise, and if they could accept those terms, they were very welcome to send me a copy.

They did, and they did. You've already guessed the next part, because here it is.





A Complete Catalogue

If this book had been around when I started out, it would have saved me about a zillion trips to the library (those too young to know what a library is can ask Uncle Google). Originally published in 2015 (in Slovenian), the book has now been translated to English. Yay for all us English speaking folks, because this extensive catalogue of information will in all likelihood never make it to your bookshelf.

Why?

Because if you're anything like me and love to geek out about plant-based cosmetics ingredients, you simply won't be able to put it down.

There are links at the bottom to where you can read about the authors and story behind the book on the publishers site, so instead of repeating what is already written, I'm going to share a few reasons I predict this is going to be an indispensable tool for cosmetics formulators of all levels.

Everything in Context

There are scads of books on herbs, plants, plant chemistry, uses of plants and plant-based ingredients, but Modern Cosmetics brings these components into a single, cosmetics-making context.

Why is this useful?

Because it answers the most common questions formulators of plant-based cosmetics have when considering ingredients for a formula.

But the reason I am unable to put it down is something entirely different, **because this book offers something uncommon to most resource books, and that is inspiration.**

Following are just a few highlights

- Mechanism of Action and Use

The overall information and characteristics of each ingredient is followed by a super useful description of function, common use, and dosages for different cosmetic applications.

- Inspirational Skincare Tips

This is one of the reasons I can't seem to put this book down. How cool is it to find these little nuggets of inspiration throughout!

A great example is on page 161 where the monograph about wheat germ oil includes an instruction on preparing your own regenerative night oil mixture:

Gently for regenerative skin care

To prepare a nourishing night oil mixture rich in vitamin E, add a few drops of sea buckthorn oil to wheat germ oil. Pomegranate oil may also be used to enrich its antioxidative properties.

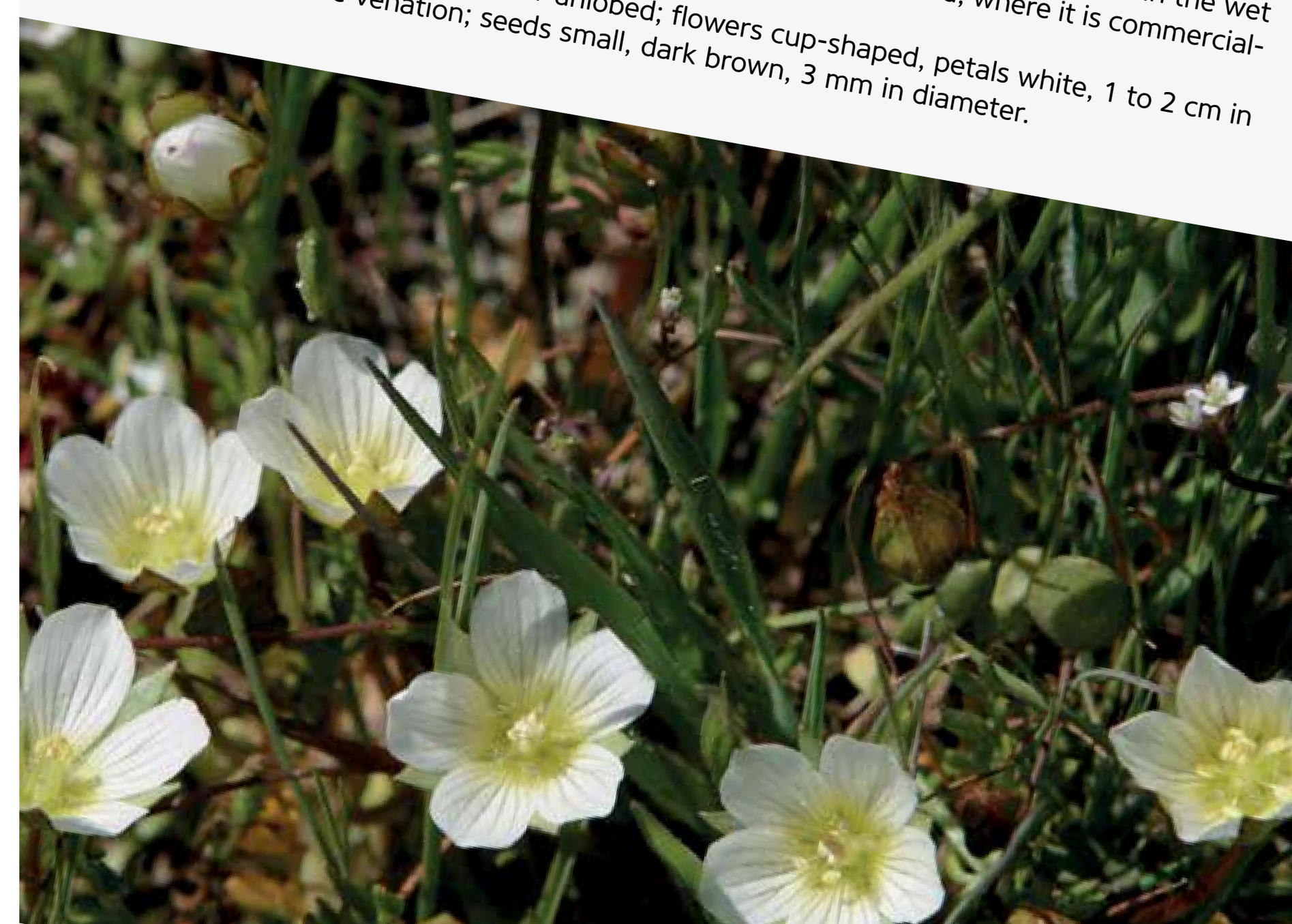
Mechanism of action and use
Wheat germ oil is valued as a good choice in the care of dry and mature skin, as well as skin with an impaired barrier function. It is supposed to have anti-inflammatory and regenerative properties due to linoleic acid. Its high content of phytosterols and vitamin E is supposed to restore the barrier function. Very dry skin may additionally benefit from the use of wheat germ oil in combination with vegetable butters rich in unsaponifiable antioxidants, e.g. cupuaçu, mango or shea butter. Wheat germ oil is also found in cosmetic products for the care of dry hair and scalp with dandruff. Pure wheat germ oil should be used in combination with more stable oils or antioxidants due to its high oxidative instability.

GENTLY for regenerative skin care
To prepare a nourishing night oil mixture rich in vitamin E, add a few drops of sea buckthorn oil to wheat germ oil. Pomegranate oil may also be used to enrich its antioxidative properties.

WHITE MEADOWFOAM • meadowfoam oil

Scientific name: *Limnanthes alba* Hartw. ex Benth.
Family: Limnanthaceae (meadow-foam family)
Plant part: seed
INCI: *Limnanthes Alba Seed Oil*, CosIng: deodorant, emollient

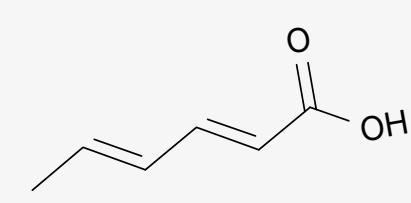
Description
White meadowfoam is an annual herb that grows up to 30 cm in height. Its name is a metaphorical reflection of white meadows with tiny, floating foam-like flowers. The plant grows in the wet grasslands of northern California, southern Oregon and Vancouver Island, where it is commercially cultivated for meadowfoam oil production.
Botanical characteristics: leaves lobed or unlobed; flowers cup-shaped, petals white, 1 to 2 cm in diameter, with distinctive venation; seeds small, dark brown, 3 mm in diameter.



Parabens are commonly used in conventional cosmetic products, but are not permitted in natural cosmetics. It is, however, a less-known fact that methyl paraben can also be found in nature, e.g. in bilberries, carrots, cucumbers and olives, where it is synthesized for defence against microorganisms. Another interesting fact is that *p*-hydroxybenzoic acid is a product of the metabolism of catechins and is found in the blood of individuals that consume green tea. The hormonal action of parabens, which is supposed to cause some types of cancer, has provoked heated debate. Scientific research confirms potential problems associated with the esters of *p*-hydroxybenzoic acid and alcohols with an alkyl chain longer than three carbon atoms, e.g. butyl paraben, isobutyl paraben, pentyl paraben and hexyl paraben.



It has been shown that the antimicrobial activity of parabens may be enhanced in combination with other preservatives that are usually permitted in natural cosmetics, e.g. *p*-anisic acid and levulinic acid. *p*-Anisic acid or draconic acid (INCI: *p*-Anisic Acid, CosIng: *masking*) is chemically 4-methoxybenzoic acid, and is found in anise (*Pimpinella anisum* L.). Levulinic acid is chemically 4-oxopentanoic acid (INCI: Levulinic Acid, CosIng: *perfuming, skin conditioning*). It is derived from degradation of cellulose.



SORBIC ACID

INCI: *Sorbic Acid*, CosIng: *preservative*

Different salts of sorbic acid, i.e. sorbates, can also be found in the CosIng database (INCI names are listed in italics): *Calcium Sorbate*, *Potassium Sorbate* and *Sodium Sorbate*. They function as preservatives.

Natural source
– mountain ash, *Sorbus aucuparia* L., Rosaceae (rose family): fruit (0.04%)



• Interesting Tidbits and Facts

Here's another example of the kind of detail of information and fun facts you get even when you just pick it up and browse through a few pages.

Pictured is the top of page 312, where this little tidbit about parabens caught my eye:

It is, however, a less-known fact that methyl paraben can also be found in nature, e.g. in bilberries, carrots, cucumbers and olives, where it is synthesized for defense against microorganisms.

I couldn't help nodding in agreement as my own article from 2012 came to mind.

[original review]