

Live an organic life

Another way to love yourself and the environment.

By Elisa Luk

Nowadays, more people take care of their health not only at eating, but also products used in daily lives. They tend to use more organic products to reduce the chemical ingested.

Chen Sau-Wan, the middle-aged shop owner of Natural Infinity which is a shop selling various types of organic products such as body care and household products, has been selling them for seven years.

Chen remembered at first she bought organic products for her daughter to provide better care, but her skin allergy several years ago changed herself.

“At that time, I have tried different products from famous brands, however the outcome is the same – my skin was searing and started to peel off, organic skincare eventually effected a radical care on me and made me trust organic products so much,” said Chen.

Also, Chen saw the impact of organic products on her customers, which make her has more confident in those goods.

Chen has several rules in choosing product since Hong Kong does not have regulation on organic products.

From Chen, she would look at the ingredients when she is importing products according to her own Chemistry knowledge. Also she would choose products with foreign official labels, such as products with the 'organic' label from the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture).

According to USDA, “organic” can be used to label product that contains a minimum of 95% organic ingredients, while the others may be non-organic agricultural products or non-agricultural products that are on the National List.¹

She has also explained the differences between natural and organic, natural products emphasize the products originates from the natural environment, but organic products also concern on the producing process, such as smaller amount of chemical fertilizers.

According to Chen, the nutrition value or effects of organic products is similar with the non-organic products, but the non-organic one may also contains chemicals like hormone or accelerator.

However, Chen agrees that organic products are more expensive compared with those non-organics, since the growing process of ingredients need extra care in order to replace the

use of chemicals, also manufacturers need to pay for the organic label, so the cost will be higher and then transferred to the price.

With the help of Internet, Chen thinks more people want to buy organic products because they can search for information in more ways to pick the suitable product.

Her shop also provides purchasing agent service to help consumer buying overseas, “they find me to buy different kinds of organic products from their own research,” said Chen.

Chen also thinks that people nowadays have more health problems, so they will try to use organic product which is cruder than medicine.

Emily Yeung, A 34-years-old customer of Chen who is also saved by organic skincare products too, “medicine can provide instant effects but Steroid made my skin thinner, organic products can really calm my skin down and solve the problem.”

She keep using organic skincare products for around two years, now rarely has serious skin trouble and has introduced friends to try organic products too.

However, organic products is still not the main trend in people’s daily lives.

Yiu Ka-lam, a 19-years-old university student, thinks it is due to the lack of promotion since most products in supermarkets and chain stores are not organic, people would not be aware of their purchasing so not many of them would think of buying organic products for their daily lives.

She also thinks the education is not enough, “it seems like everyone is using the same type of products, thus the harm of chemicals to both our body and environment is underestimated.”

“We always told to be environmental friendly is by using less or recycling, but seldom talks about the products we use can also make great changes to the environment, such as chemical shampoo actually contains microplastics that can harm the ocean,” explained by Yiu.

Yiu said the higher price would not affect her in buying organic products if she knows they can really help her, she is using organic shampoo which makes her hair stronger than before.

She suggested that exhibitions and market for organic non-food products for public can help to make them become more determined to live organically.

On the other hand, Tsang Ling Yan, who is also a 19-years-old university student, doubted the effects of organic products.

“I have tried handmade organic insect repellent and organic shampoo purchased by my mother, but I don’t find they are so effective and worth to pay more expensive to get them,” said Tsang.

“The happiest thing is to see my customers are benefited from the products I choose for them, they can really get out from their hardship and then share to more people,” said Chen, who wholeheartedly believes in organic products.