

JOJOCARE – THE STORY OF JOJOBA IN AUSTRALIA

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Presentation to Cosmoprof Asia 2007 15 November 2007
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

On behalf of Australia's jojoba producers I warmly welcome visitors to Cosmoprof 2007, members of the media, international trade representatives and fellow exhibitors to the telling of the story of Australian jojoba.

It is not every day that a person has the opportunity to announce a new industry for his country and a first step onto the international stage with fresh new messages about what is really a very old but relatively undiscovered product.

The story of Australian jojoba extends back through millions of years of evolution within the plant kingdom and over thousands of years of use of plants by modern man for health maintenance and wellbeing.

Do we ever have a new idea? Or is it that realisations repeatedly come together in cycles over the memory spans of recordable human history and we reframe them within the contexts of the present.

Jojoba is like that as is the bush tucker and natural medicine knowledge of the Australian aboriginals.

We didn't watch, listen and learn at the time we entered the lands of the traditional owners and now centuries on we are attempting to gather the tattered remnants of knowledge and common sense that remain and to focus on proving in the laboratory, the benefits and uses that native populations have demonstrated practically for thousands of years.

Jojoba is a primitive plant. It evolved in the arid regions of America and its upward pointing flat leaves speak of millennia of tortured summers when the fittest survived by minimizing the surface of the leaf that was exposed to the sun at the hottest parts of the day. But this is just one of the remarkable attributes of this unique and interesting gift from the plant kingdom.

In the mid 1970's researchers were aggressively searching for an alternative to whale oil as a base carrier for cosmetics. It was clear that commercial whaling would be soon banned and at the time the main carrier oil for cosmetics was the cheek oil from sperm whales.

Researchers found that the golden liquid wax pressed from the bean of the jojoba shrub remarkably had a molecular structure so close to the wax esters in human skin sebum that human skin could not recognise the difference. Jojoba was found to be superior to whale oil in that it was also naturally antibacterial, antifungal, anti-inflammatory and contained natural antioxidants giving it an extensive shelf life. This also gave jojoba the ability to stabilise volatile ingredients when they were added to jojoba.

Why in 1975 were these properties such a new revelation? The Native Americans had been using golden jojoba as a conditioner, food and medicine for centuries before first European contact.

In 1798 it was recorded that jojoba was celebrated for suppressing conditions of the urinary tract, for facilitating childbirth and for wounds. It was said to be an excellent remedy for cancer and was edible.

The Apache used it for healing wounds. The Seri used it to relieve sores of the head, to relieve eye soreness and most tribes used jojoba for the treatment of wounds and swellings. In the Sonora desert natives used jojoba for hairdressings, skin salves, medicinal preparations and food.

They attributed magical powers to the golden liquid wax: legends that it could accelerate the healing of cuts, scratches and sores and promote hair growth were widely accepted.

There has been a quirk in the evolution of humanity to the present that the vanquished are inferior and their knowledge should be dismissed to avoid adding value to the maintenance of their culture and common sense. How many times do we see that process repeated still?

The revolution that was the 1970's changed so many things and for a while a good slice of the human race went feral. Through the following decades aggressive marketing attempted to train us to fear the natural, lest it leap up and attack us; it seemed the only solution often to the preparation that caused your problem was a new gentler formulation.

This is a simplification but it is the case that we are now seeing the powerful emergence of a generation in our populations that makes its own decisions and rejects the marketing drive towards unnatural. Now emerging are young adults who aggressively pursue the natural, the non-chemicalised, the environmentally beneficial or at least environmentally neutral, and of most importance products that deliver quality and the brand promise.

Today is therefore the time for jojoba to re-emerge within the context of 2007 and coincidentally, this is the exact time when Australia can now deliver that promise.

Back to the mid 1970's

Australia's peak research organisation CSIRO monitored the results flowing from the intensive research on jojoba and in 1978 the organisation introduced selected jojoba plant material into Australia. In a joint plant breeding and selection program with the NSW Department of Agriculture researchers established planting trials across Australia and over more than a decade selected, improved and adapted jojoba varieties specifically for Australian conditions.

Five commercial varieties were released and over the past decade producers have established large commercial plantations across five States of Australia.

Jojoba was a leap of faith for these producers but they believed in it then and they believe even more in it now.

Like so many regions Australia is being increasingly impacted by a hostile climate. 2007 continues seven years of the most dreadful drought in recorded history. Generally drier conditions and hotter temperatures have become part of life in the normally hugely productive inland regions of Australia for most of the past decade, as the young jojoba plantations took root and grew. Now there are incidences of plantations not having seen water for six years, yet they are thriving.

Large commercial jojoba plantations are now established in Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, Queensland and NSW. Jojoba has shown itself to be ideally suited to many of the inland regions on light sandy loams soils that are characteristic of very large tracts of inland Australia.

Australia is well known for its sunshine, clean environment, high quality agricultural produce, safety and reliability. Australian origin is an attractive guarantee for many markets.

Last year in Australia, our jojoba plantations entered a yield increase phase. Our knowledge of the maturity phases of the jojoba plant tells us that yield will now increase from these plantings by 30% per year until 2015. And as jojoba shrubs can live for perhaps 200 years, Australian jojoba is here to stay.

Our producers love to grow it.

In Australia, jojoba has no serious pests or diseases so chemicals are not sprayed on the shrub. Plantations are permanent plantings so there is no cultivation required and therefore no fossil fuels are burned in the maintenance of the plantations. Livestock, wildlife and birds do not eat it. If you were asked to sit down and design a model crop for Australia at this time in our husbandry of planet Earth, you would come up with jojoba every time.

Jojoba is a desert plant, a 3-4 metre shrub. It is drought tolerant, salt tolerant and has an extensive tap root system that seems to be able to find water where no water is evident.

The fertilised flower of the female plant forms a pod. A bean forms inside the pod. When the bean is mature the pod splits and the bean that looks very much like a coffee bean simply and silently falls to the ground.

In Australia, producers leave the bean to naturally dry in the shade of the skirt of the shrubs. Then twice each year they drive sweeper harvesters through the plantations to collect the beans.

Beans from all plantations across Australia are taken to NSW where they are mechanically cleaned to remove any plant material or soil then gently cold pressed at below 38 degrees Celsius.

About 50% of the bulk of the jojoba bean is a luxurious golden liquid wax that has remarkable qualities for skin and hair care, massage and as a carrier for cosmetics, Aromatherapy blends and dozens of products that are applied to skin, hair and nails.

The by-product of this process jojoba meal has now become three valuable products for the beauty industry. As it comes from the press a coarse grade jojoba meal is sold to Herbal soap manufacturers as a scrub ingredient and to beauticians as a coarse body scrub. A slightly finer grade is a luxurious body scrub and a fine grade is a superb facial scrub. Beauticians are finding that adding golden jojoba back to this fine meal allows them to prepare scrub pastes from this one natural gift from the plant kingdom.

Nothing whatsoever is added to either of these product lines. They are both naturally preserved by the antioxidants they contain and have an extensive shelf life. 100% of the fruit of the jojoba plantations now has a high value commercial application.

The Sleeping Giant

Jojoba is a brand new industry for Australia and Australian jojoba is a brand new product for Australia and the world.

I established the Jojocare brand exactly twelve months ago to give the Australian industry a national brand. Australia's jojoba producers own the brand and through their own national marketing company Jojoba Australia they control the quality and consistency of pure Australian jojoba all the way from their inland plantations to the pack in your hand.

This is fundamentally important as the Jojocare brand becomes the symbol that guarantees the Australian origin, purity, quality and consistency of all products carried under this brand.

This sets Australian jojoba apart from suppliers of jojoba of widely varying origin and quality, and from those who would blend cheap jojoba with vegetable oils and other inferior fillers and market these as pure jojoba at very cheap prices, as has happened and continues to happen in some regions.

Our Jojocare small pack range was designed with specific end uses in mind following considerable market research.

Our one litre Jojocare pump pack is ideal for clinical use by massage practitioners, Aromatherapists, Naturopaths, Podiatrists and mature home users. Massage Practitioners find that the large long chain carbon molecules in golden jojoba give a superior luxurious feel on the skin and

as jojoba is a liquid wax it does not have an oily feel. It leaves clients feeling soothed and their skin soft and moisturised. Importantly jojoba washes readily from towels and does not stain unlike oils. Jojocare Australian jojoba is used exclusively in Australia by The Australian College of Massage, LaStone Therapy and leading training institutions and Universities where massage and beauty are taught.

The Jojocare everyday pack range is driving our knowledge of the benefits jojoba users are achieving from using jojoba for topical and all over daily treatments. These packs have been selling online since December 2006.

When we receive notification of an online purchase I send a reply direct asking customers to email me in 4-5 weeks to tell me what happened. These responses are fuelling our knowledge of the many benefits of jojoba and are leading our research into the technical reasons for these outcomes. Many of these reports are posted on our Customer Feedback page on the Jojocare website and if you do nothing else when you are next online, read them.

Customers are solving serious conditions like acne, psoriasis, dermatitis and eczema. Women are using jojoba to avoid stretchmarks, internally to facilitate childbirth and to treat thrush.

Jojoba is proving to be non-allergic and suitable for all skin types. It is regulating oily skin, bringing elasticity to dry, cracked skin and bringing health and manageability to hair and nails.

This is the story of Australian Jojoba up until today. I am pleased and proud to place this beautiful product and our Australian national brand before you and to confirm the establishment of our Distributorship with LP International to make Jojocare pure Australian golden jojoba known and available through many Asian countries.

You are all now a part of the story of Australian jojoba. It is very pleasing to be part of this industry at this time with very excited customers at one end of the supply chain and excited producers at the Australia end. It is very exciting to be in the middle with a product that can bring so much good to the world as we move forward from today.

Thank you.