

COSMETIC TESTING: SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

There has been a recent article in the national papers regarding a large cosmetic company 'ending animal testing. This article first appeared in our magazine, Compassion:

L'OREALBEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Since the early 1980's there has been a worldwide campaign against cosmetic giant L'Oreal's animal testing activities. In its response to accusations that it is involved in animal testing, the company downplays this by saying that it stopped testing its FINISHED products in 1989 and by highlighting its research into developing non-animal alternatives for testing the safety of products and ingredients. Recent publicity concerning L'Oreal's involvement in animal testing, brought the usual denials from the company, so BWC decided to pin L'Oreal down to get some straight answers!

According to L'Oreal, the company was in a position to use ingredients meeting the 2009 ban introduced by the 7th amendment to the European Union (EU) Cosmetics Directive. This ban "prohibits testing on animals and the marketing of products for which localised or single exposure tests on animals were previously necessary". A complete ban will only be possible in 2013, when alternatives have been developed to replace animals in all tests. However, it seems that after 2009 L'Oreal will continue to use ingredients, covered by the 2013 deadline, which may have been subjected to tests, such as the non-systemic toxicity tests. In other words, far from imposing a fixed cut-off date and not using animal tested ingredients, L'Oreal has a "post-dated" cut-off date of 2013 in the EU and is only keeping up with EU regulations that demand the company's compliance!

L'Oreal has manufacturing plants in countries outside the EU and these will comply with the laws applicable in the country of manufacture and the country where the products are sold. The EU regulations are obviously only applicable in EU territory, but L'Oreal admits to complying with "applicable regulations" everywhere else. As the US, Canada, Australia, and most other countries, do not impose a ban on animal testing for cosmetic ingredients, L'Oreal will continue to use animal tested ingredients outside the EU. Companies that impose a true cut-off date would not be using such ingredients!

Another mark against L'Oreal is the fact that unacceptable company Nestle owns nearly 30% of L'Oreal shares and together these companies own GALDERMA a pharmaceutical company focusing on dermatology and providing prescription and over the counter medicines and INNEOV also working in health and beauty research. Pharmaceutical company Galderma, admits to its involvement in animal testing and, being the co-parent company, this makes L'Oreal just as guilty!