



The individual who nominated *The Synergy Company* for the Organic Excellence award and the Environment and Sustainability award simply said, “In truth, no other company comes close to what they have done for 15 years on these fronts and continue to do daily.” While NBJ has not investigated every firm in the natural products industry, an interview with founder Mitchell May suggests a high likelihood this is true.

*The Synergy Company* is “founded on the premise that good faith, integrity and environmental responsibility are eminently compatible with good business,” the firm’s Web site says. Indeed, *The Synergy Company* – and its raw material division Synergy Production Laboratories, which distributes its exclusive Synergized® raw materials – is a manifestation of this belief: It has quietly become a very successful international business while meticulously minimizing, calculating and mitigating its impact on our planet.

“It’s our lifestyle. It’s our core. It’s our soul. It’s our heart, and we do it because it is a commitment to life that we have made,” May said. For May, it is a commitment that reaches all the way back to childhood where he first witnessed the adverse health effects of pesticides on farm workers in California back in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In the late 60’s and early ‘70s, May helped start a 2,000 acre organic cooperative farm where his research on sustainable agriculture was put into practice and allowed to evolve.

As his scientific interest in sustainable agriculture continued to grow throughout his life, he traveled to the South for research and began to weave into his environmental and organic consciousness a realization of the importance of nutrition on health. What he witnessed in the Southern U.S. during the 1970s was the impact of processed foods and unvaried diets on health, weight and the human race.

The three life themes of “organic,” “environmental” and “sustainable” gelled for May after he nearly lost his life in a catastrophic automobile accident. After conventional medicine failed to heal him, he became a participant in a parapsychology research project at the University of California at Los Angeles. He regained his ability to walk and his sight and regenerated nerves, bones, muscle and organ tissue through the intervention and mentorship of a healer.

It was while he was apprenticing with this healer that May noticed the majority of health conditions they were researching and treating were the result of nutritional, lifestyle or environmental triggers and as a result, they developed – through seven years of research at UCLA – the formula for his superfood product Pure Synergy.

In 1985, May put thought into action, building a house outside Moab, Utah that is 100% solar powered and starting a self-sufficient and sustainable family lifestyle. Rain water is collected, filtered and re-used and a greenhouse feeds his family. This is the same house he lives in today, and, aside from the solar panels, it looks and functions exactly like a conventionally-powered home (except it creates no greenhouse gasses, is never without power and costs next to nothing to operate).

May started *The Synergy Company* in Moab in the late 1980s and put into practice what he had already implemented in his life. For starters, *The Synergy Company* and *Synergy Production Laboratories* are

100% wind powered. *Synergy Production Laboratories* grows, develops and manufactures over 250 certified-organic raw materials and is directly responsible for converting more than 2,000 acres to organic agriculture/aquaculture, with 4 million kilograms of certified organic and freshly harvested raw materials and 300,000 kilograms of its Synergized certified organic finished ingredient powders distributed each year. *The Synergy Company* also manufactures and markets six certified-organic finished products and multiple other organic products for other companies.

All of Synergy's products and formulas have been organic from day one, free of any additives and made with only "truly natural" compounds – even the cotton used in the bottles is 100% certified-organic. Paper used throughout the firm is recycled. The company's boxes are made from recycled cardboard, and the bottles from recycled glass. Additionally, because of their environmental impact, solvents such as hexane and acetone are not used during extraction. What's more, they have a firm no Genetically Modified Organism and no irradiation policy, and magnesium stearate (and other processing aids) is never used in encapsulation or tableting because it is a trans-fatty acid.

May's attention to detail is impressive. Since the company's inception, Synergy has calculated "every single usage of energy the firm consumes – whether it is the boxes that we use, the glass bottles, the equipment (including manufacturing the equipment), the building, our employees transportation to-and-from work, our air travel, every input into each of our raw materials – and we calculate that carbon footprint, and we plant twice as many trees to offset that," May said. Synergy pays urban kids to plant the trees throughout the U.S. in order to give them an experience in the wilderness, he added.

*The Synergy Company* and its raw material division have also been at the forefront of several environmentally-friendly practices. Synergy invested in and committed its founding to the use of soy ink (to eliminate lead and other toxic compounds) and was the first company to use the biodegradable packaging material EcoFoam, a product Synergy helped support and launch. "In living out our beliefs, what we found was we had to do it ourselves to be different," May said. "We have a very, very stringent program and policy to ensure that what is happening is in compliance with what our ecological and socially responsible positions are."

On top of May's personal and professional attention to the environment, organic products and sustainability, he and Synergy have also reached out to their community. Through Synergy's efforts, Moab became the first city in North America to be 15% wind and solar powered. The accomplishment was acknowledged by the Environmental Protection Agency: it named Moab as the nation's first Green Power Community. The agency's Green Power Partnership program was based on Synergy's work in actively converting Moab to a Green Power Community – EPA describes the partnership as a "voluntary program helping to increase the use of green power among leading U.S. companies." Unsurprisingly, Synergy is a founding member of the program.

*The Synergy Company* will be a hard act to follow next year, but NBJ is excited to discover the many gems it knows are out there.

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