



Press Release

Cosmetics specialist cosnova eliminates 100% of microplastic particles from its products

Sulzbach, Germany, 28 March 2023 - All products by the cosnova brands essence and CATRICE are completely free of microplastic particles since March 2023. This is because the harmlessness of its own cosmetics products has top priority for the company. In 2020, the beauty player from Sulzbach near Frankfurt, Germany, decided to remove microplastic particles from its product range because they are damaging the environment - and it has now achieved its goal.

In Germany, 977 tonnes of microplastics are released into the environment¹ each year through wastewater from washing off cosmetics and cleaning products. Once there, the small, non-degradable plastic particles pose a threat to the health of humans and animals.

For cosnova, every single particle is one too many. To curb the enormous impact of these tiny plastic particles, Europe's volume market leader in colour cosmetics began updating its formulas in 2020. A Herculean task that has paid off: the entire range of the CATRICE and essence brands is now 100% free of microplastic particles.

"When a study revealed that 50 percent of our consumers use water to remove their make-up, it became clear to us that we had to ensure that our products did not release microplastics into the environment - because even decorative cosmetics contribute to water pollution with microplastic particles, despite what is often discussed in the industry. I am very proud that we have now succeeded in permanently removing the particles from the products of our CATRICE and essence brands," says Katrin Steinbach, Technical Unit Expert Corporate Responsibility at cosnova.

What is microplastic?

Microplastic particles are tiny, solid plastic particles that are insoluble and non-biodegradable. About 50 percent of these particles are released into the environment via wastewater. Cosmetics account for between 0.1 and 4 percent of the total. The highest proportion of microplastic particles in Germany is caused by tyre wear.

¹ Source: Study (in German) „Mikroplastik und synthetische Polymere in Kosmetikprodukten sowie Wasch-, Putz- und Reinigungsmitteln“ (Microplastics and synthetic polymers in cosmetics products as well as detergents and cleaning products), Fraunhofer Institute for Environmental, Safety and Energy Technology UMSICHT, commissioned by the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union Germany (NABU), Oberhausen, September 2018.



Plant-based alternatives for the plastic all-rounder

Microplastic particles have been very popular in the cosmetics industry for a long time. They can be used in a variety of ways to achieve different effects: for example, they can mattify, give the skin a soft feel or make the product last longer on the skin.

Switching to microplastic particle-free formulas with the same quality is not easy. Nevertheless, cosnova has made every effort to eliminate this all-rounder from the ingredients in its products. "Microplastics cannot be replaced one-to-one, nor can they be removed retrospectively. We had to completely renew our formulas to make them work without the plastic particles. Together with project partners and our own project team, we went through every single product and tested alternative ingredients, especially natural substances such as corn or rice starch. But it was worth the effort," says Katrin Steinbach.

No more volatile silicones as of 2025

The cosmetics specialist is not stopping at the elimination of microplastic particles. To develop products that are even more sustainable, cosnova is also working on formulas that are free of volatile silicones. The spectrum of silicones and their applications is very broad, as is their health and environmental relevance. Like microplastics, these synthetic plastics enter the environment via wastewater, where they are difficult to break down. This is why cosnova wants to completely eliminate volatile silicones from its formulas by 2025.

"Harmlessness of products": one of the five pillars of sustainability

As an international player in the beauty industry, cosnova takes its responsibility to reduce its ecological footprint seriously. In addition to the "harmlessness of products", the cosmetics company pursues four other pillars of corporate responsibility: climate & environment, waste prevention (zero waste), working conditions and social initiatives. More information on cosnova's commitment and the goals already achieved can be found in the latest sustainability report:

https://www.cosnova.com/storage/98/co_Sustainability-Highlights_2021_ENG_web.pdf

ABOUT COSNOVA BEAUTY

cosnova Beauty with headquarters in Sulzbach/Germany is managed by the Executive Managers Mathias Delor, Javier González, Gesine Hild, Thorsten Mühl, Christina Oster-Daum, Hilko Prah and Yvonne Wutzler. cosnova has around 700 employees around the world. Meanwhile, its cosmetics brands essence and CATRICE are sold in over 80 countries in Europe, North and South America, the Middle East, Asia, Oceania and Africa. The company's customers include drugstores, food retailers, department stores, perfumeries and fashion chains as well as various online trade partners. In addition, essence and CATRICE are also each represented with their own online stores.



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