

# Eco Max

## Eco Max Brushes

All the brushes in our Eco Max Range are handmade from natural fibres and manufactured in Sri Lanka using Fair Trade principles, but what makes them so special and why choose fair trade and natural fibres?

A healthy choice – Scrubbing your vegetables rather than peeling keeps all the natural nutrients that are found close to the surface. Our natural fibre brushes have no nasty chemicals and even the sealants used are non-toxic. They are all plant based fibres and Coir also has the advantage of a natural resistance to fungus and mites.

A responsible choice – By choosing natural fibres you are supporting developing countries and helping to fight hunger and rural poverty. Almost all natural fibres are a product of agriculture and most of them are grown in the developing world. By choosing fair trade you know that the workers are being paid properly and that there is no child labour.

A sustainable choice – Natural fibres are a renewable resource. They are also carbon neutral: they absorb the same amount of carbon dioxide they produce. During processing, they generate mainly organic wastes and leave residues that can be used to generate electricity or make ecological housing material. And, at the end of their life cycle, they are 100% biodegradable.

## What are the natural fibres in our brushes



Coir or Coco fibre is the fibrous material found between the hard inner shell and the outer coat of a coconut, the bit you don't eat. A mature tree can produce 50 to 100 coconuts per year.

The brown coir fibre is harvested from fully ripened coconut and is about 10 to 30 cm long and is relatively water-proof and one of the few natural vegetable fibres with a natural resistance to fungus and mites makes it perfect for use as a kitchen or bathroom brush.

The Coconuts are grown by small-scale farmers, who use local mills for fibre extraction which makes it an important source of income.



Sisal is a natural fibre extracted from the *Agave sisalana* plant. It lives for about 7-10 years, growing between 200 to 250 usable leaves with each leaf producing around 1000 fibres. It can be grown throughout the year, even on marginal land and in semi-arid areas, and does not require fertilizers and pesticides making it ideal for poorer areas where agriculture is the mainstay of the economy.

The fibres are strong and durable, do not absorb moisture easily and are resistant to damage by salt water. In Tanzania where our sisal comes from the biomass left after the fibres are taken out is now being trialled as a biogas powering rural homes and the sisal processing.

The unbleached sisal has a golden creamy colour and is a firm but soft fibre ideal for a body brush.



Palmyrah is produced from the stalk of the Palmyrah Palm tree. It is the base of the palm frond that is attached to the tree and when dry, falls to the ground. Twelve leaves a year are cut from young palms and then the stalks are soaked in water and beaten to extract the fibre. After combing the fibre is sorted into lengths and colours and left to dry before use. The fibre is resistant to both alkali and acids and water resistant which makes it perfect for brushes.



Jute is extracted from the bark of the Jute plant and is one of nature's strongest vegetable fibres.

In India and Bangladesh some 4 million farmers earn their living and support 20 million dependents from jute cultivation, while hundreds of thousands work in the jute manufacturing sector.

