



## Defining Natural Perfumery and Recognizing the Need for Self Regulation

A Position Paper

Issued by The Natural Perfumers Guild

<http://naturalperfumers.com>

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### **Introduction**

Perfumery, as an art and profession, has a long and distinguished history. For the thousands of years perfumers have practiced their art, nature has been both their inspiration and the source of their materials. From simple mixes of basic raw materials to exquisite and complex blends of painstakingly prepared distillates, perfumes and perfumed products have enriched our lives and the lives of our predecessors, making them sweeter, fuller, and more enjoyable. Perfumers' creations were used in temples, palaces and ordinary homes; their containers are found among the artifacts of most ancient civilizations.

In the mid-1800's, scientists began to separate natural raw materials into their component parts, isolating aromachemicals such as coumarin and vanillin. Within a few decades, scientists found ways to create these aromachemicals without using natural source materials, resulting in the first synthetic perfumery ingredients. With the commercial demands of modern perfumery dictating their choices, perfumers switched from creating perfumes exclusively from natural materials to creating perfumes that were largely or entirely synthetic.

Fortunately, natural raw materials continued to be grown, processed and distributed. Interest in natural perfumery among perfumers and consumers has increased and now an ever-growing number of perfumers wish to create perfume using only rich, complex and evocative natural ingredients.

Natural perfumers seek definition of their art while consumers seek information that can help them navigate the complex fragrance marketplace. Definition and information on standards for natural aromatics in perfumery have not been readily available from reliable, independent sources. This document is the first step in both defining natural perfumery and proposing self-regulation for the industry. Subsequent documents will address additional important industry definitions and

standards, such as safety, environmental concerns, raw material and product testing, and manufacturing processes.

The Guild is issuing this document for further discussion and consideration as a standard for defining natural perfume and the adoption of uniform language for self-regulation.

### General Definitions:

- *Natural perfumery* is the art of blending *fragrance ingredients of natural origin* (see below) to create aesthetically pleasing *natural fragrance compounds* used to fragrance a full range of industry products from fine perfume to personal and household products. The *natural fragrance compound* is the aromatic foundation for *fragrant natural products* and *naturally fragranced products* (see below).
- *Fragrance ingredients of natural origin* include:
  - Botanical raw materials, such as flowers, barks, seeds, leaves, twigs, roots, rinds, etc.
  - Soil derivatives, such as mitti
  - Exuded materials from plants, such as oleoresins, balsams, and gums
  - Animal derivatives, such as ambergris and Hyraceum tinctures and absolutes
  - Essential oils derived from botanical raw materials by dry, steam, or water distillation or by mechanical processes
  - Other forms of essential oils, such as rectified oils, bacterially fermented oils, fractional distillations, molecular distillations, isolates, terpene-less oils, and folded oils
  - Distillates, such as hydrosols
  - Tinctures derived by macerating a botanical raw material in ethanol, such as tincture of vanilla
  - Infusions derived by macerating a botanical raw material in a wax such as jojoba or a fixed oil such as almond oil
  - Concretes, pomades, absolutes, and resinoids, all extracted from botanical raw materials using a solvent other than water, followed by removal of the solvent by distillation. Solvents may include hexane, CO<sub>2</sub> and others.
  - Attars, rhus, and choyas
- A *fragrant natural product* is made by combining a *natural fragrance compound* with a wholly natural *carrier*. A *fragrant natural product* may be labeled “natural” (e.g. natural perfume, natural soap, natural massage oil, room spray, linen spray, etc.)
- A *naturally fragranced product* is made by combining a *natural fragrance compound* with a partly or wholly synthetic *carrier*. A *naturally fragranced*

*product* may be labeled “naturally fragranced” (e.g. naturally fragranced perfume, naturally fragranced soap, naturally fragranced massage oil, etc.)

- *Carriers* are used to deliver fragrance as well as function to the user of a fragranced product. Some *carriers* are simple and natural (such as ethanol from grain, grapes, sugar beets or sugar cane; expressed oils; waxes) and some are simple and partly or fully synthetic (such as synthetic ethanol, some specially denatured alcohols, silicone fluids). Some *carriers* also are more complex and can be wholly natural, or partly or wholly synthetic.

Complex *carriers* include creams and lotions, soaps, shampoos, deodorants, incense, botanical potpourri, and more.

Note: The definition of “natural carrier” is evolving. Numerous organizations have promulgated definitions and standards. The Natural Perfumers Guild does not endorse any particular definition or standard at this time.

- Any fragrant product made with a wholly natural *carrier* and a partly or wholly synthetic fragrance compound may use the term “natural” on its label in reference solely to the carrier, provided that the label must clearly state “contains synthetic fragrance” (e.g., natural soap, contains synthetic fragrance).
- Any fragrant product made with a partly or wholly synthetic *carrier* and a partly or wholly synthetic fragrance compound may not use the term “natural” on its label.