



News Release  
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### Gaia Herbs Receives Sustainable Excellence Award

*Herbal supplement leader recognized for eco-friendly, organic, energy-efficient, socially conscious and philanthropic business practices*

**Brevard, NC (June 24, 2013)** – Gaia Herbs, an herbal supplement leader for more than 25 years, received the first ever Award for Sustainable Excellence, sponsored by the John Paul Selects organization. The award was presented during the annual LOHAS Conference (Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability) held in Boulder, CO.

Gaia Herbs was one of six leading or emerging brands in the natural products industry considered for the award. All companies were evaluated for their efforts in six key areas, including 1) eco-friendly, organic, sustainable practices, 2) recycling or carbon offset programs, 3) energy efficiency, 4) animal/pet friendly, 5) community, social causes and philanthropy, and 6) donations. Gaia Herbs was the only company that had regular practices in all six areas.

Some of the programs highlighted were Gaia's yearly compliance with the USDA National Organic Program, use of solar energy for heating water at their manufacturing plant, wind power energy offset credits for 100% of their power usage, vegetarian products, and several social mission and community support projects detailed on the Gaia Cares section of their website.

Accepting the award on behalf of Gaia Herbs was Ann Buchman, the company's Vice President of Marketing. During her acceptance remarks, Buchman stated:

“Receiving this award offers recognition that Gaia's mission, which is to cultivate health & well-being by stewarding sustainable relationships between plants and people, is truly being practiced.”

Buchman went on to explain how Gaia had been a very humble company for its first 20 years, even though it had been on a steady course of sustainable sourcing, following organic practices and ensuring that no harmful substances or processes were used in the making of their extracts – practices that not all companies in the industry could report. Then in 2010 the company committed significant resources to a rebranding and development of the industry's first herb traceability program and began to tell their story more directly and consistently to consumers and the retail trade.

“Brands and organizations like ours have a responsibility to tell the stories of our missions and give birth to purposeful products and services, because we can change the face of human and planet wellness.”

The other five companies considered for the award included Acure Organics, Chico Bags, Lotus Wei/Chocolate Wei, Organic India, and Sweet Riot.

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**L to R:** Ric Scalzo (Gaia Herbs founder and CEO), Ann Griffen Buchman (Gaia Herbs Vice President of Marketing), Jonathan Kendrick (Co-Founder John Paul Selects)

**Gaia Herbs** is a certified organic grower and nationally-branded manufacturer of botanical wellness solutions based in Western North Carolina. The company cultivates 300 acres of medicinal herbs which, along with all operations at its 45,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility, are organically certified each year by Oregon Tilth under USDA's National Organic Program. The company offers herb ingredient source information and test data validation through its industry-first traceability platform called MeetYourHerbs®. Gaia Herbs' line of all-natural herbal products is carried by independent health food retailers and co-ops, national and regional natural products retail chains, and healthcare professionals. To learn more, call 800.831.7780 or visit [www.gaiaherbs.com](http://www.gaiaherbs.com).

**John Paul Selects** is an online marketplace and distribution partner for emerging sustainable brands and manufacturers. Named after co-founder, humanitarian and entrepreneur John Paul DeJoria, John Paul Selects mission is to attract, inspire and educate the human spirit on behalf of the best emerging sustainable brands and eco-conscious entrepreneurs who are striving to make a difference, both socially and environmentally. [www.johnpaulselects.com](http://www.johnpaulselects.com)

**LOHAS** focuses on educating and building community around the central theme of healthy and sustainable lifestyles for individuals and societies. LOHAS provides business focused resources on the growing \$290B LOHAS market and serves as the central hub for education, updated news, and B2B gatherings of those cultivating the LOHAS movement. LOHAS not only shares information but also provides practical tools and techniques for people to implement into their businesses that enable LOHAS values to penetrate into various situations. These values include: authenticity, transparency, honesty, integrity, professionalism and love for mankind and the planet. [www.lohas.com](http://www.lohas.com)

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