

LIVE ORGANICALLY

This is another new page for *the Organic Gardener* that we hope will help you fully embrace an organic lifestyle. Its aim is to bring to notice environmentally-friendly products and services that might be used by just about anyone at some time. Cleaning products, natural building materials, and non-toxic household pest control products are among those on our list. Look out for steamy items such as pressure cookers – that

is the new-beaut kind that are easy to use, will save heaps of time and energy, and won't blow you up!

Your suggestions are welcome, but give us a chance to get some of the many stored up ideas published first. And don't be surprised if we slip in a few snippets and stories from around the world.

– Your Ed, Steve Payne

PAINT THAT WON'T MAKE YOU FAINT

The story of LIVOS started with finger painting more than 30 years ago in Germany.

According to the LIVOS company, a small group of teachers, which included some hobby chemists, were working with handicapped children. The teachers decided to create non-toxic, organic finger paints for their students. Other teachers and parents found out and soon the group was swamped with requests from schools and hospitals wanting the safe paints for children. Now LIVOS is a thriving global company producing healthy, organic products for home decorating and home care, including paints, oils and waxes. *+cleavers*

Made without harmful chemicals, LIVOS naturals contain only biologically and environmentally-responsible ingredients, grown without pesticides. The science of phytochemistry, which updates centuries-old formulas based on natural resources, is used in the formulation of LIVOS products.

LIVOS is an ancient Celtic word that means 'brightness and light'. The company says that long before people developed acrylic, latex and other synthetic resins, houses and furniture were cared for and brightened with organic pigments blended with natural oils and other ingredients – all safe for humans, animals, air, water and soil.

Many conventional oil-based paints and stains containing synthetic solvents, such as petroleum distillates, are the nasties that need to be avoided. Out-gassing from these products is caused when their chemical components react with other chemicals in the air to form Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). These can aggravate allergies and cause skin irritations, as well as affect human immune systems.

As far as durability goes, LIVOS says that one only needs to see the many wooden houses of Europe, still standing after more than a century, to bear witness to the preserving powers of linseed oil, used in most LIVOS formulas. The company says it works with local German farmers to source organically-certified supplies of its main ingredient, organic flax, which is pressed at

the LIVOS factory in northern Germany and used as linseed oil. Another key ingredient is beeswax which builds a protective shield, lends an attractive gloss, and produces a non-skid finish.

Natural, non-toxic paints received a flurry of publicity in Australia over a decade ago, but deserve wider popularity and use. The often higher financial cost is a restraint to many, but superior coverage and the health costs of conventional products are crucial factors in the favour of natural paints, waxes and varnishes. Just as much of the mass-produced, non-organic food on the market is 'too cheap' – not accounting for the environmental cost of its production – so conventional paint manufacturers leave the economic and health consequences of pollution to public authorities.

LIVOS products are 100 per cent biodegradable, meaning their dried remains can be disposed of with regular household garbage without harming ground water or soil.

The company says its products will go further – usually with double the coverage – of conventional ones. And they look good! LIVOS and other natural paint companies deserve our support.

For prices and availability, contact:

LIVOS Australia, 17/26 Megalong Street, Katoomba, NSW 2780.

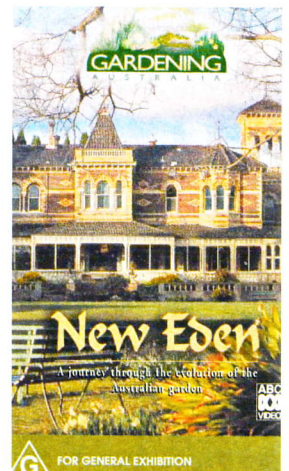
Phone/fax: 02 4788 1117; web: www.livos.com.au

NEW EDEN ARRIVES

As it happens, you won't find too many people in *New Eden*, the latest release from ABC Videos. But, what you will do is explore the evolution of the Australian garden from early white settlement to present day designs. Among the segments are Cornucopia, which looks at the influence of the Victorian era on Australian gardens; and Foundations, which examines the traditions and contributions of migrants.

Presented by Richard Heathcote, curator of the historic Rippon Lea, the series uncovers gardens as social documents – reflections of art, science and history.

***New Eden* is available for \$29.95 from all ABC shops and centres.**



WIN A RAINFOREST SURPRISE

We have three copies of the wonderful new book *Gardening with Australian Rainforest Plants* to be won, courtesy of the publishers Blooming Books.

Written by Ralph Bailey and Julie Lake, the book gives you the 'how to' of creating your own rainforest garden, along with profiles of 100 rainforest plants suitable for the backyard. See the extract on page 24 and the review on page 81.

Just write in and tell us why you deserve to win this snappy prize and you could be spending winter madly planning your new garden.

Send your entries to:

***The Organic Gardener*/Rainforest Competition, PO Box 199, Alexandria, NSW 1435. Entries close May 24, 2002, and the best three entries win.**

