



From humble beginnings an ecological star is born!

Ecover was established in 1980 and stands today as the world leader in ecological cleaning products. Our unique approach encompasses sustainability and all of our products offer environmental advantages that benefit humans, animals and the environment.

Ecover was founded by Frans Bogaert whose dream was to create a washing powder free from phosphates which were having an irreversible effect on the environment.

In 1984, after much trial and error, Frans launched a phosphate free washing powder and dishwashing agent. Today, under the ownership of Jørgen Phillip-Sørensen CBE, Ecover offers a complete range of washing up, household cleaning and laundry products. They are all, without exception, innovative products that are created using plant and mineral based ingredients. These products continue to evolve – what was good enough yesterday is not acceptable today, and we know that the products offered today will not be good enough in the future.

What makes Ecover truly different is that we are more than a product; rather Ecover is a complete proposition – we practise sustainability in our production methods, management and ingredient sourcing. Ecover adheres to a five point matrix which takes into account not only the price, performance and convenience of our products but also sustainability and health. We use the World Health Organisation's definition of health which incorporates the wellbeing of the whole person - both mental and physical - and the environment in which they live.

Sustainability runs throughout our business – this means that a product has minimal environmental impact during and after use, but also that the impact of manufacturing the product has been taken into account. For example, using renewable sources of raw materials and low energy manufacturing processes. A sustainable approach encompasses ecological, social, and economic issues from

concept to final disposal of the product. This approach is epitomised by our ecological factory – famous for its unique green roof.

By the end of the 1980's Ecover products were available in both health food stores and UK supermarkets and a loyal customer base was beginning to grow. It became clear that the existing factory's production capacity was inadequate and had to be expanded quickly to meet the demand for Ecover's ecologically sound detergents. However, Ecover did not want to set up a 'conventional' factory, and so a new challenge was seized upon – to build the ultimate ecologically sound factory. Under the continued guidance of Jørgen Phillip-Sørensen CBE, and with a great deal of effort and passion, not to mention painstaking research, the impossible was achieved and the world's first ever ecological factory opened its doors in 1992.

The building is oriented to benefit from the movement of the sun from east to west, ensuring maximum daylight and limiting the need for artificial light. The roof is covered in sedum which supports wildflower planting. This provides excellent thermal and acoustic insulation in all seasons. For example, despite there being no central heating or air conditioning in the factory the temperature never falls below 4 degrees or above 26 degrees. In the winter, any heating required in the factory is supplied locally by reflector heaters powered by natural gas.

Naturally, Ecover only use green energy throughout the company and we keep energy consumption levels low by opting for low speed appliances, aiming for flexible machines and set ups and using techniques that do not require cleansing with water. The factory also has its own water purification system. Twice a day, a large volume of waste water is pumped into a large reactor, mixed for several hours with sludge that contains high levels of bacteria, and then aerated. The sludge then settles and the clarified water is pumped away to the regional water purification plant. We also collect rainwater from the roof, which is used to flush the toilets in the factory, which further minimises the use of water in the factory.

Today Ecover still retains the verve and intensity that drove Frans' ambition over 25 years ago. Ecover truly is a pioneering company, who continually pick up the challenge to raise the ecological standard and set a benchmark for sustainable products of the future. Each of our ingredients are carefully selected to ensure that they come from renewable plant or sustainable mineral sources. In addition all Ecover's products have minimal impact on the aquatic environment – for

example our Washing up Liquid is 20 times less toxic to aquatic life than a conventional product. Above all our products leave no traces behind them, either in your home or the environment, as they quickly, *and completely*, biodegrade. And of course all of our products still are, and always will be, phosphate free!

Ends

Boilerplate