



sourcing pure neem oil in Canada

Posted by [Peter Drevniok](#)

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[Peter Drevniok](#)

[sourcing pure neem oil in Canada](#)

January 13, 2013 07:20PM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 31

One problem I have encountered is that I cannot buy pure neem oil in Canada. At least it is not allowed to be sold as a pest repellent. I am investigating buying neem oil that is marketed for "cosmetic uses" but this seems like it might be expensive; however, one product from Theraneem Organics does claim to be cold-pressed (see: [[organixsouth.com](#)]). I'm actually not sure if this product is available anymore or indeed if it is suitable for orchard purposes. I am inquiring at a local natural food store if they can source it for me. Pure neem oil sounds essential to orchard holistically so this seems to be a major roadblock for me. I currently have 15 fruit trees in an informal orchard, along with a nursery of apples I have grafted (perhaps 45 trees so far that are one to two years old) from which to choose when I plant my larger, more formal community orchard.

Question: Does anyone know of any Canadian orchards having a source of neem oil and/or what they are doing to get around this federal regulation? Can I have a holistic orchard without incorporating neem oil in my sprays? Any ideas and suggestions would be appreciated.

Peter Drevniok

Wakefield, Quebec zone 4b

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[David Maxwell](#)

[Re: sourcing pure neem oil in Canada](#)

January 13, 2013 09:03PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 197

This one is actually dead easy. Order it from Ahimsa Alternative ([www.neemresource.com](#), ph 877-873-6336). They will happily send it to Canada without specifying any particular usage - it is just a jug of neem oil, and what you might do with it is entirely up to you. Canada Customs equally happily takes no interest - again it is just a jug of oil, and they have no interest in what one might want to do with it. (Although they may want to collect duties on it.) The Pesticide Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), (which I think is actually a branch of Health rather than Agriculture), have indeed not approved neem oil for sale as a pesticide. But this is because nobody has paid the very considerable cost of asking for approval, not because anybody has suggested that it might be harmful. The principle here is that everything in the world is banned and considered toxic and dangerous, unless it has been examined and proven safe. So everything is banned by default. But in practice this ban extends only to prohibition of selling commercially in Canada, not to either importation or use. But it would not surprise me if somebody objected to your selling fruit which had been sprayed with neem, (if they found out...)

And, a practical detail: get it sent by mail, not by courier. Courier companies want anywhere from \$15 to \$50 automatically for a "Customs Agent". Things coming by mail generally go right on through, and at worst cost \$5.

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[Michael Phillips](#)

[Re: sourcing pure neem oil in Canada](#)

January 13, 2013 11:40PM

Moderator

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 621

What makes this all the more interesting is that pure neem oil is a standard ingredient in herbal lotions. You can rub it on your skin ... but in Canada, god forbid ... you cannot apparently spray it on plant foliage. Leastways, if you wish to be in compliance with your pesticide regulatory folks. Let's establish a first perception of safety by realizing this particular plant medicine has been used for a couple thousand years in both Ayurvedic medicine and Ayurvedic agriculture.

Here in the States, it seems to have been more a matter of what the organic certification inspector thought about the underlying purpose of neem. Quite a few folk acknowledge the nutritional nature of the fatty acids in neem by listing its use as a "leaf polish" in their farm plans. True enough. It's also fair to say something similar about neem oil inducing a strengthened immune response in the treated plant by way of the terpenoid content in the unadulterated oil. This is in no way to be confused with the toxic mode of action of a true fungicide. Which brings us to the azidiractins, being the 7 or so closely related constituents in neem oil that inhibit the molting cycle of insects. Neem does not kill insects outright but eventually "locks" larvae/pupae in a juvenile stage by which means they perish. (Just imagine how long you would last if you couldn't get beyond age 13!) It's on this point that the neem-is-a-pesticide interests insist on bureaucratic sanction north of the border.

Pure neem oil actually comes in two versions in the United States. The Ahimsa Organics label is exactly as David points out, *just a jug of neem oil*. That totally suits my purposes. Growers going through certification, and thus needing an EPA registration number (84181-2, indeed) can order the NimBioSys jug with a label that clearly states that neem oil works as a "biological insecticide" with anti-feedant, repellent, and insect-growth regulator properties. Here's the [EPA report on pure neem oil](#) which absolutely counters a number of points to

be found on this anti-neem "["pesticide truths"](#) website out of Canada. *One can always prove every angle on the dangle on the Internet, eh?* Oh, well. The people behind importing fair trade neem remain one and the same, only now you go to <http://www.nimbiosys.com> to learn product details. I'm pretty sure Usha and Arun chose to keep the wholesale price the same on the NimBioSys label despite the extra costs and aggravation of the registration process ... this label (just to be clear) must be purchased through distributors and not directly from the Ahimsa Alternative.

So, Peter, yes on "cosmetic neem" where you can find it. It will likely be far more expensive by the "theraneem pint" than if purchasing by the gallon. David presents a totally viable option for you in my view, and that's shipping it in from the states. The other part of your question regarding if there's a replacement for pure neem oil for holistic ends needs to take into account all three of the attributes of neem I've spoken about above. We do have sources for fatty acids (cocunut oil and raw milk, for starters) and numerous herbs contain terpenoids. But no North American plant that I know of (*yet, he says with a smile*) offers the impact of azidirectins on borers and the moth complex and overwintering wannabes.

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 01/14/2013 01:54AM by Michael Phillips.

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[David Maxwell](#)

[Re: sourcing pure neem oil in Canada](#)

January 14, 2013 12:57AM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 197

I would like to add, (to my surprise!) a defence - or at least an explanation - of the PMRA. Their mandate, quite appropriately, is to try to assure the safety of things we spray on our produce and fruit. To do this they have set up a complex system of required proofs of safety, which extends down as far as measuring residues on the fruit at the micro-micro mol level, testing which can be done only in specialised labs, (approved by WHO!). More to the point, the required testing regimens are enormously expensive. Unless there is a market large enough to justify this expenditure no manufacturer is going to go to this expense. And the market in Canada isn't big enough. It isn't a question of the Canadian regulators being unreasonable or stupid. It is simply a question of setting up controls, which have to be applied rigidly across the board; as soon as one permits the introduction of common sense, one sets the stage for abuse by less-than-honest actors. (Surround, which is nothing more than fine clay, can be sold in Canada only to individuals in possession of a Pesticide Applicators Certificate, the same as neonics or similar out-and-out poisons. But this is because the manufacturer applied only for an agricultural certification, which in turn obliges a PAC.) But I think it would probably be impossible to create a control mechanism in which control is based on actual toxicity and common sense, rather than the current one size fits all approach. Note also that the above is in no way unique to Canada - every country marches to this same drum. And the suggestion of reciprocal approvals fails on the varying degrees of acceptability in different jurisdictions. (Interestingly the EU is generally considerably stricter than North America.)

For those of us not concerned with commercial production, I would suggest that there really is no major problem. The material can be obtained from whatever source, simply as the material, and sprayed on your fruit to your heart's content . The regulators take no responsibility for the folly of individuals; their interests lie solely in the protection of society as a whole.

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[Robbie Anderman](#)

[Re: Ontario source for neem oil](#)

April 02, 2013 02:03AM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 56

[New Directions Aromatics](#) also looks to be a good source of cold pressed neem oil in bulk and they are in Ontario, which cuts shipping and means no problems with customs

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 04/02/2013 03:45AM by Michael Phillips.

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[Peter Drevniok](#)

[Re: Ontario source for neem oil](#)

April 15, 2013 06:11PM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 31

Thanks, Robbie. I ordered from NDA last week and received it this morning. Unfortunately, the temperature dropped last night (-3.4) and the contents were very cold upon arrival. My research indicates that this should not be too much of a concern.

Peter Drevniok

Wakefield, Quebec zone 4b

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[Francis Brabant](#)

[Re: sourcing pure neem oil in Canada](#)

April 20, 2013 03:00AM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 11

Well, I got to this topic a bit late but you can also order from www.dyna-gro.com, They have a retailer near you:

Hydroculture Emporium, Inc.

416 Richmond Road, Suite 3

Ottawa, ON K2A 0G3


Phone: 613-715-9472

To complete what David said about PMRA, I would like to point out that this system was put in place to prevent another DDT fiasco.

Everything is considered dangerous and suspect by definition because pesticide usually are!

In fact, it's technically illegal in Canada to spray your orchard with skim milk or Champagne for that matter!

Neem oil can be legally used in orchards because many suppliers put a bit of urea in it: Tadaa! Instant Foliar Fertilizer! Wink Wink...

 smiling smiley

7 acres in Oka (Québec)
Certified Organic Orchard
Sunrise, MacIntoch, Spartan, Cortland, Empire,
www.verger-bio.ca

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[David Maxwell](#)

[Re: Holistic Spray Economics](#)

April 20, 2017 08:05PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 197

Help! I had no idea Neem oil was such a complex issue. I had obtained my Neem from Ahimsa, largely because Michael sang their praises. But it has now been brought to my attention that there are at least two suppliers in Canada also - New Direction Aromatics and Botanic Planet. Both of these, I believe, operate south of the border also, so my question is not specific to us lost souls in the Frozen North. New Directions' product is described as "cold-pressed from seeds of Azadirachta indica. 5 kg sells for \$70.26 \$Can. They proudly point to being Kosher Certified, (what on earth is the significance of this?), free of pesticides and free of BSE, (again, I fail to see the relevance of this, since it is not being made from cows' brains). Botanic Planet, who bill themselves as "The only Organic Supplier in Canada," sell their Neem oil for \$210 for 4 Litres, (which will be somewhat less than 5 kg.) plus shipping cost. Ahimsa sells their product for \$83/Gal (\$US), and offer to certify it as "free of pesticides or harmful levels of metals". To get this product to me would cost another \$80 in postage, plus exchange, bringing the cost per 4L to around \$210 (Can), shipping paid..

So, here we have literally a 3-fold difference in price for what appears to be the same product. Where is the rub? Why should I not purchase from New Directions? Are there dramatic differences in quality, potency, etc. between Neem obtained from different suppliers?

[Broomholm Orchard](#)

Zone 5b in Nova Scotia

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[Michael Phillips](#)

[Re: sourcing pure neem oil in Canada](#)

April 21, 2017 01:44AM

Moderator

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 621

Editor's Note: The artistry of merging topics allows me to move David's post above from another thread to here. Pretty obvious why. And frankly we need to update this information. Interest here is high as this post has something like 27,000 views, the highest of any forum post. Canadians do not have it good when it comes to holistic products. A similar dichotomy exists for those seeking effective microbes. Border hospitality at this moment in time is anything but. It will be interesting to hear what savvy Canucks have figured out on the neem front, eh? *And yes, my ability to speak Canadian is pretty basic!*

[Lost Nation Orchard](#)

Zone 4b in New Hampshire

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 04/21/2017 01:59AM by Michael Phillips.

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[David Maxwell](#)

[Re: sourcing pure neem oil in Canada](#)

April 21, 2017 03:23AM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 197

I am in awe at Michael's artistry in shifting electrons. And, knowing his holistic bent, I would wager that every one of those electrons was recycled.

Seriously, though, is anybody, (Michael?) aware of any cautions in selecting Neem products? Is "Cold-pressed Neem oil" equivalent between suppliers? (I understand that not all EMs are equal. Does the same apply here?)

[Broomholm Orchard](#)

Zone 5b in Nova Scotia

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[David Maxwell](#)

[Re: sourcing pure neem oil in Canada](#)

April 08, 2018 03:35AM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 197

Despite Michael's statement that my query a year ago had elicited "27,00 views, the highest of any orchard post", nobody actually answered my query at all.

To reiterate, is there any good reason to question obtaining cold-pressed neem oil in Canada from New Directions Aromatics. They post a detailed analysis which among other things, suggests an azadirachtin content of 29%. Is this a reasonable concentration? (Michael? You seem to have acquired an expertise in the subtleties of neem oil)

And, somewhere somebody was bemoaning the lack of a supply of EMs in Canada. Gardener's Supply, in Victoria sells Pro-Bio mother culture, (as well as ready mixed)

[Broomholm Orchard](#)

Zone 5b in Nova Scotia

[Reply Quote](#)

[Michael Phillips](#)

[Re: sourcing pure neem oil in Canada](#)

April 08, 2018 02:44PM

Moderator

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 621

Check out the [TerraNeem](#) post, David, as I have detailed certain qualitative aspects of pure neem oil there. Azadirachtin content is typically given in ppm. This is what determines *cosmetic-grade* versus an effective orchard product.

[And that post count was for this entire discussion over the course of the five years since this discussion was begun!]

[Lost Nation Orchard](#)

Zone 4b in New Hampshire

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 04/08/2018 02:47PM by Michael Phillips.

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[gloria bell](#)

[Re: sourcing pure neem oil in Canada](#)

June 30, 2019 01:40AM

Registered: 5 years ago

Posts: 20

You can also buy it here:

[\[blackswallowsoil.com\]](#)

Scroll down near the bottom. 164.00 per gallon

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