



# 2020 SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

OUR ANNUAL ACCOUNTING TO OUR PEOPLE AND OUR PLANET

## Dear Banyan Botanicals Community,

If you are reading this letter, you are likely a person with a vested interest in the growth, progress, and evolution of our company—an employee, a customer, a supplier, a family member, a friend, or a member of one of our local communities or the broader Ayurvedic community. This is our third annual accounting to you, our stakeholders, on how we are doing in regards to our social and environmental commitments.

I imagine that no one will be surprised to learn that 2020 did not go as planned. The pandemic turned the world upside down and Banyan was not exempt from all the change and challenges. Our Warehouse team adapted to stricter health and safety protocols, from working in isolation or in small pods, to regular temperature checks, extra cleaning, and wearing masks at all times. Their commitment to our mission and dedication to serving our customers allowed us to continue the essential work of making and shipping our products at a time when our customers needed us most. Most everyone else on our team made the adjustment to working from home and figured out a way to stay connected and productive while also adapting to the blurring of work and family time and to cats walking on keyboards and video bombing zoom meetings.

2020 also brought fire to Southern Oregon. For a few scary weeks in September, portions of our Ashland staff were under evacuation. In the face of uncertainty and community tragedy, again the team found ways to support and take care of each other. There were several close calls, and thankfully no employees lost their homes, but thousands of our neighbors were not so fortunate.

There was also a national election and an ongoing stream of social injustices that demanded our attention and stirred our hearts. We made a commitment to educating our team on unconscious racial bias and learned that creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace requires sustained, consistent effort. We also learned that we have work to do to build even greater trust among our team and to improve our communication skills in order to hold a safe and compassionate space for difficult and transformative conversations to take place.

I am so proud of our team and their ability to work together through these challenges and do meaningful work. In addition to serving thousands of customers, launching new products, and addressing supply challenges, they organized, volunteered, donated, and gave their time and resources to help those around them navigate this difficult time. This report will call attention to and celebrate some of the many successes of 2020 and also acknowledge where we fell short of our intentions.

Thank you for taking the time to witness our journey. We appreciate you and your continued support. Together we will continue our work to create a world that is more balanced, healthy, and harmonious.



Yours in Health,

**KEVIN CASEY**

Co-Founder & CEO





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# WE'RE PROUD TO BE A B CORP.

Certified



This company meets the highest standards of social and environmental impact

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Corporation

“ B Corp is not just about getting a certification. It’s a way of approaching business that is holistic. You really need to commit to it and make it part of your culture.

— Kevin Casey, Co-Founder & CEO

## Our Promise

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We’re passionately committed to helping people achieve and maintain optimal health and well-being through the wisdom of Ayurveda. In accordance with Ayurvedic principles, we see the inherent connection between individual health, community health, and the health of the world.

As we grow and evolve as a company, this understanding is at the foundation of our vision and informs each decision along the way. By providing herbs that are organic, sustainably sourced, and fairly traded, we are committed to cultivating harmony within ourselves, our business, our communities, and the planet. This commitment is demonstrated by our third-party certifications—B Corporation® and USDA Organic—as well as our commitment to pursuing Fair for Life certification.

## 2020 Highlights

- We continued to pursue Fair for Life certification for some of our top products by completing our second annual audit, led by certifying body Ecocert. Fair for Life is a globally-recognized certification program for fair trade and responsible supply chain practices in agriculture, manufacturing, and trade, which aligns with our core commitments as a company. Certification typically takes years and requires the support and participation of our entire team.
- We fell short of our 2020 goal to roll out four certified Fair for Life herbs due to employment changes and the increased demand put on our teams during the pandemic. We aim to introduce our first certified Fair for Life herbal products in 2021.
- We continue to hold our Certified B Corporation® status. B Corporations are leaders of the global movement of people using business as a force for good.™



## Our People

### Employees

We have a team of dedicated, hard-working, and compassionate people who believe in the power of Ayurveda to transform lives. Over time we have realized that in order to provide the best service to our customers, we also have to be committed to the health and well-being of our team members.

2020 presented plenty of challenges as we learned to adapt during the pandemic. As an essential business providing wellness products, our team worked harder than ever to fulfill customer orders, keep products in inventory, and keep one another safe, healthy, and connected.

### 2020 Highlights

#### Working through the Pandemic:

- With the pandemic, tremendous time, energy, and effort went into keeping our team as safe and healthy as possible. Our team's caring for one another, the sacrifices they have been willing to make to keep each other safe, and their dedication to our mission has allowed us to continue to serve our customers.
- Starting in March, all who could work remotely were encouraged to do so. For those who couldn't work remotely, we upheld stringent safety protocols, including more rigorous and frequent cleaning, masks, COVID symptom questionnaires, and temperature checks.
- Non-managerial team members who were unable to work from home in order to do the essential work in our warehouse were paid an additional \$1 per hour beginning in March. In October, that amount was raised to \$2 per hour and has continued to be paid well into 2021.
- All pandemic-related time off was covered by Banyan as additional paid time off.

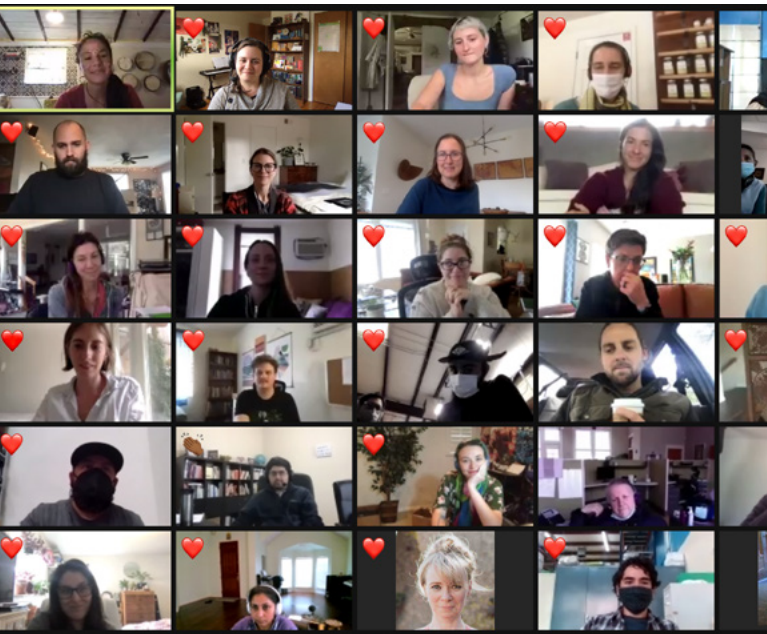
“ When I started working at Banyan, I quickly learned it's all about caring! Caring about our customers, caring about our planet, and caring about each other!

— Housseem Bessassi, Purchasing and Shipping Supervisor





Megan, Director of Marketing, and her son Ellis open their CSA box from Banyan Farm.



The Banyan team connecting during a team-wide Connection Session.

**Surviving Wildfire:**

- Several employees in Southern Oregon were evacuated during devastating fires. To support their well-being during such difficult and scary times, we offered them increased flextime and relaxed schedules to take care of themselves and their families.

**Growing Our Teams & Strengthening Our Relationships:**

- We hired 30 new employees in 2020, including three rehires who had moved and were now able to work remotely. No employees were laid off.
- We hosted our first Banyan Connection, an online gathering with all team members, including our Spanish speakers, to foster inclusion as we get to know one another across locations and teams.
- We began translating company-wide emails into Spanish and offering a Spanish translator for company-wide meetings.

**Maintaining & Improving Benefits:**

- In gratitude to our employees, we provided a one-time bonus of 5 extra paid days off to full-time employees who had been with us a year or longer.
- We implemented a new paid sick day policy in addition to our paid time off policy.
- We offered employees a discount on produce from our partners at Banyan Farm through their new community supported agriculture (CSA) program.
- Each quarter we pool 5% of our net profits and distribute them amongst full-time, eligible employees. This is a benefit we have maintained for almost two decades.
- We continued to offer a generous benefits package, including a 2% employer 401K match with socially- and environmentally-conscious investment options; a comprehensive health, dental, and vision insurance program, paying 90% for eligible employees and 75% for dependents; and life insurance and short-term disability policies for all full-time employees.

These two products were created to support immune health in 2020 and beyond.



## Customers

### 2020 Highlights

- In 2020, we served a total of 425,671 customers, an increase of 31% from the previous year. This measurement is important to us as we use the number of customers served as an indicator of achieving our mission to help people achieve and maintain optimal health and well-being.
- We created and introduced 10 new products. 3 were made to support immune health, including Immune Health NOW, Turmeric Tonic, and Lung Revive liquid extract.
- Immune Health NOW was the quickest product we ever made and brought to market! The product was created in March 2020 to support customers while other products were sold out. It is packed with some of the most powerful herbs in the Ayurvedic pharmacopoeia. We sold over 7,830 packets of Immune Health NOW.
- Our Customer Care team was given a budget to offer discounts at their discretion for customers in need. Because of this, we offered close to \$15,000 in discounted product on 158 customer orders.
- In July, we joined over 1,000 advertisers participating in a Facebook advertising boycott #StopHateforProfit. The boycott was organized by civil rights groups with the intention of protesting the platform's handling of hate speech and misinformation.



“Thank You!  
Working as a healthcare worker during this pandemic, I am so grateful for Immune Health NOW. It is energizing but grounding and I’ve grown to love the earthy taste!”

— Meaghan, Banyan Customer



## Suppliers

Our supply chain reaches halfway around the world and entails many complexities. We are continuously working to cultivate long-term, healthy relationships with our suppliers and to provide our customers with herbs that are certified organic, sustainably sourced, and fairly traded. We strive for win-win relationships where the circle of benefits travels from the fields to the customers, and back to the farmers.

### 2020 Highlights

- Our Sourcing team developed a 5-year sourcing plan, including increasing our use of Fair for Life and FairWild ingredients and forging stronger relationships across our supply chain.
- We maintained our FairWild certification for Triphala tablets.
- In an effort to strengthen our supply chain, the Sourcing team developed a supplier ranking system, which acts as a guiding tool for measuring the future growth and integrity of our supply chain. With this foundation in place, we can achieve more direct relationships with producers while maintaining our commitment to trading fairly.



✓ Hand-harvesting lush bacopa at the Dhansura Farm in Gujarat, India.






**banyanbotanicals** During a crisis, there are always people working bravely on the front lines. Essential workers, whose jobs are vital to public health and safety, are often also the most at risk of being under-supported.

We'd like to support these individuals by offering our new formula, Immune Health NOW, for free for as long as we can.


Are you an essential worker? We've set up a simple submission page on our website [ link in bio ]

 We sent free Immune Health NOW to essential workers throughout the pandemic.

**There's no health without harmony.**  
**No harmony without justice.**

#BLACKLIVESMATTER



 We support justice, equality, and dignity for all. These core values were put into action in the wake of George Floyd's murder.


## Community

Ayurveda helps us achieve greater harmony in every sense—not only within ourselves, but also with others. That's why we're an active member in all of our communities, from local to global. We support non-profit organizations and projects that are aligned with our mission and values through charitable giving, in-kind donations, and by supporting employee giving and volunteerism.

### 2020 Highlights

- To support our customers and community during the pandemic, we offered free Immune Health NOW to those in need, including frontline essential workers, people who were unemployed, and senior citizens.
- We responded to the injustice of the murder of George Floyd by forming a Racial Equity Training committee and making donations to civil rights organizations that were nominated by our employees, including Campaign Zero, Center for Policing Equity, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and many other grassroots organizations.
- We offered our second annual Banyan Community Grant Fund. This fund supports those making Ayurveda more accessible to disadvantaged people in their community. This year, we supported projects that serve marginalized communities, namely Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). Both 2020 grant recipients work to make Ayurveda and natural health care more accessible to BIPOC communities. [Read more about our grant recipients.](#)

- We are dedicated to supporting the healing of our Southern Oregon community after the wildfires. We offered financial donations to [Unete](#), [Immigrant Fire Relief Fund](#), [Rogue Valley Fire Relief Fund](#), and we provided both product and financial donations to [Remake Talent](#). We acknowledge that this healing will take years, and we're committed to the process.
- In December, we offered our new [Gift Back Cards](#), which function just like our original digital gift cards, except we match 20% of the gift card total and donate it to an organization of the customer's choosing—medicinal plant conservation, food sovereignty, or community wellness.
- We made cash and in-kind product donations to more than 30 charitable projects, including The Ayurvedic Institute, American Botanical Council, Punarnava Healing Community, United Plant Savers, Southern Oregon Land Conservancy, Stone Cabin Clinic, 2020 Mom, The Breasties, Roadrunner Food Bank, and The Climate Collaborative.
- We continued to support our friends at Punarnava Ayurvedic Trust in Tamil Nadu, India, by sponsoring free monthly Ayurveda medical camps for those living in interior villages without access to healthcare.
- We continued to match employee donations to US non-profits, up to \$100 per employee per calendar year.
- We sponsored the National Ayurvedic Medical Association (NAMA) Conference for the 16th consecutive year (every year since its inception), supporting their goal to advance Ayurveda in the United States.
- We began our Living Ayurveda Internship (LAI) program in Williams, Oregon, at Banyan Farm. A total of 12 interns participated across Spring and Fall sessions. They learned about Ayurveda, Yoga, Vedic astrology, Western herbs, bio-regional Ayurveda, plant identification, farming, cultural appropriation, and Indigenous histories of Southern Oregon.

 LAI interns at Banyan Farm.







Collected amalaki fruit from Panchvati Farm in Gujarat, India.



## Our Planet

One of our core values as a company is to honor the sanctity and beauty of Nature. In alignment with this value, we are committed to increasing our awareness of how our business practices impact the environment and operating in ways that cultivate ever-greater harmony and reciprocity with Nature.

We have found that this is no easy task in our modern world. As we import the majority of our herbs from the other side of the planet and provide products for people across the US, we currently find ourselves with more questions than answers. As much as we recognize the value of the work that we do, we also acknowledge the role we play in contributing to the climate and ecological crises.

As we identify ways we can operate in a more ecologically friendly way, we are researching solutions and allocating the resources to take action.

## Sourcing

2020 was an adventurous year for our Sourcing team! With many of our ingredients coming from India, we found ourselves navigating the unexpected uncertainties that arose from the pandemic lockdowns. Even with the challenges that were presented, such as government shutdowns, we were able to work closely with our suppliers and successfully maintain most of our organic inventory.

We stepped into 2020 with an emphasis on building more domestic partnerships, reducing our carbon footprint, and supporting our local communities by sourcing from small, regional farms.



## 2020 Sourcing Highlights

- We strengthened and expanded our Sourcing team, with the goal of promoting deep, supportive relationships with small, regional farms. This is critically important to us at a time when large industrial farms are becoming the norm.
- Our partners at Banyan Farm successfully grew a handful of USDA certified organic herbs, including ashwagandha, bhringaraj, tulsi, skullcap, bhummyamalaki, and hemp. In total, Banyan Farm grew close to 40,000 lbs. of fresh plant material, which dried down to 4,350 lbs. Many of these herbs will be used in our products. Banyan Farm is continuing to implement regenerative, organic farming practices to support biodiversity and healthier soil.
- We formed a new partnership with Oshala Farm, located in Southern Oregon. They grew USDA certified organic dandelion, thyme, elecampane, marshmallow, and ashwagandha for us. Looking forward, Oshala Farm will also grow burdock, rosemary, and valerian.
- We continue to lease farmland at Panchvati Farm in Gujarat, India, cultivating brahmi/gotu kola, bacopa, bhringaraj, and bhummyamalaki. In 2021, we will lease a new farm in Maharashtra, India, and grow bala, chitrak, and anantamul.
- 99.5% of the herbs we sourced in 2020 were certified organic. The only two exceptions were kutki and talisa, which are grown without pesticides but currently have no certified organic sources. We are working toward certified organic sources in 2021. Our kutki remains CITES certified indicating that it has been sustainably cultivated in accordance with the requirements of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
- We provided a market for over 59,000 pounds of certified organic herbs grown in India on land that might otherwise have been used for non-organic agriculture.





Top: Herbal oils being made in our certified organic production facility in Albuquerque, NM.

Bottom: Banyan friend taking oil waste to convert into biofuel for his truck.



## Manufacturing, Packaging, and Shipping

The care that we put into securing pure, high-quality, raw materials extends to the processes we use to transform the herbs and oils into products. Our herbal oils and balms are made in-house in our certified organic production facility in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and our tablets and liquid extracts are also produced in certified organic facilities by our partner manufacturers.

While the purity of the products is maintained, there is still much for us to learn about how we can produce, package, and transport them using less fossil fuels. In 2021, we will embark on detailed carbon mapping in order to measure our emissions.

We will also continue to invest time and resources into product packaging that factors in life cycle impacts, greenhouse gas emissions, and end of life (recycling) of packaging. With that in mind, we are identifying changes that can be made and are working diligently to implement them.

### 2020 Highlights

- We recycled, composted, or reused over 50% of our manufacturing wastes, including the waste from our herbal oils, which are either composted or recycled into biofuel.
- Banyan friend, John, has been using our oil waste as biofuel for his truck more for than three years.
- We consulted with numerous recyclability and packaging industry experts throughout the year and learned that our journey to sustainable packaging is not as simple as eliminating plastics. In turn, we established a comprehensive rubric to help us measure all environmental impacts of each packaging option to guide us in selecting the most responsible options available for our customers and the planet.



## 2020 Packaging and Shipping Highlights

- 90% of plastic bags have been removed from our packing materials.
- We continue to pack orders with 100% recycled newsprint paper, and we use less paper during the packing process thanks to a systems upgrade.
- To reduce cardboard waste, when possible, we pack orders in recycled boxes, gently used boxes, or boxes that are Sustainable Forest Initiative certified.
- We continued to package our tablets and oils in PETE 1 plastic, which is lighter in weight and requires less carbon to manufacture and ship than glass.
- We have made a public commitment to reduce the climate impact of our packaging with the [Climate Collaborative](#), a community of businesses in the natural products industry joining forces to reduce climate change.




- ✓ We use sustainable and recyclable packing materials as much as possible.



## Office and Administration

### 2020 Highlights

- One of the upsides to many of our employees working from home in 2020 is that less carbon was emitted due to less commuting.
- Almost no business travel took place in 2020. Learnings and zoom practices will extend beyond the pandemic.
- We printed our catalogs on FSC certified paper with 10% post-consumer recycled content made with trees grown in responsibly-managed forests. We also used so-seal approved inks on an energy-efficient press powered by 100% wind power.
- Our total water consumption went down 21% while our total energy use went up 40%. We saw a drop in water use because many employees were working from home, and a significant increase in energy use due to greater manufacturing of products in order to keep up with the increased sales demand of health products in 2020 during the height of the pandemic.



Many of us have adapted to working from home. Our animals have enjoyed the new routine!





**Banyan Botanicals** was founded in 1996 with the mission to help people achieve and maintain optimal health and well-being. As an Ayurvedic lifestyle company, we specialize in products made from Ayurvedic herbs that are organically grown, sustainably sourced, fairly traded, and made in the USA. Our product line includes the largest selection of USDA certified organic Ayurvedic herbs as well as herbal tablets, liquid extracts, massage oils, and Chyavanprash. Banyan is committed to providing exceptional customer service, inspiring educational content, and the highest quality Ayurvedic herbal products that are safe, pure, and effective.

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