

Farmaesthetics: Celebrating Rural American Beauty

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There are a lot of ways to connect to your roots, and for sustainable beauty brand founder, Brenda Brock, there were seven generations of Texas farming to honor. Born and raised in Texas, Brock was introduced to herbal formulation in the kitchen on the farm where her family still works and lives. Her Newport, Rhode Island-based beauty line, [Farmaesthetics](#), pays homage to the creativity, practicality, and sustainability of American rural life, an aspect of American culture that is oftentimes poked fun of in modern media. Brock lived in New York City for six years before relocating to Newport, where she met her husband and now raises her family and runs her all-American business.



Brenda Brock's great-grandmother on the family farm in Texas in the 1800s. (Photo: Brenda Brock)

“Everyone thinks that rural culture is very rugged, but the kitchen culture is very pristine and a lot of attention goes into cooking and sewing and growing,” Brock tells Yahoo Beauty. “I was very inspired by the gardens — not just for eating but also for making concoctions like pretty flower waters. That’s the tradition I came from.” One example of American rural practicality that Brock incorporates into her beauty line is cornmeal. Her family would use cornmeal to scrub the dirt off their hands after working the fields, and they also kept a Tupperware dish of cornmeal in the shower for body exfoliation. Now, the [Farmaesthetics Midnight Honey Body Buzz](#) (\$39) features finely ground yellow cornmeal as the natural exfoliate. “They use that in body treatments at the Four Seasons,” she laughs. “It has such a simple, humble, and practical beginning.”



While wasteful consumerism and disposable goods seem like an inevitable byproduct of modern American culture, Brock believes that we can look to American rural culture for lessons on sustainability. “In rural America, people really take care of their land, so they’ve been sustainable without calling it so. And they were conservationists without calling themselves so,” she tells Yahoo Beauty. “They re-use and re-purpose things.” Maximum freshness means more nutrients for your face and body, whether you’re digesting food or applying a skin serum. Consequently, all Farmaesthetics ingredients are sourced from family farms and traditional cobalt blue glass is used for the containers. “I remember what the cabinets looked like in my grandmother’s house. In the ’60s, everything was in glass. Vic’s Vapor Rub was in glass! The bottles were beautiful. Everything was quality and substantial. When I test packaging, I sit the packaging next to a 1936 radio, and if it fits, it works.”

While many modern day beauty products are all about quick fixes and hiding the effects of fatigue, Brock’s approach to beauty is based in taking and making time for yourself. “In rural cultures, there is more of a regiment involved in beauty. There is more time allotted to self-care. When I was growing up, we took time to get ready for bed. You take time to wash your face and take a hot towel and really compress your skin.” She admits that during the years she spent in New York she didn’t make or find the time for self care. “But on the farm, the sun goes down, the crickets are out. You really take the time to brush your hair and clean your face. Your body is led into a beauty routine naturally, in sync with the time of day, the time of the year.”