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# INTERVIEW JENNIFER MCCOLM

Interview and Introduction by Roxy Manning • [www.RedCarpetRoxy.com](http://www.RedCarpetRoxy.com)



As Earth day draws near, I had the pleasure of interviewing one of those leading the charge in the field of eco-sustainability, Jennifer McCollm. Founder of Jennifer McCollm Certified Organic, as well as over 20 farmers markets in California; she has been a true advocate of organic living. She resides in an eco-conscious home in Calabasas, California, that includes an organic fruit and vegetable farm, organic vineyard, as well as goats and chickens, which she uses for fresh milk and eggs, and a newly acquired piglet, just because he is cute! As we settled at her outdoor table and gazed at freshly drying bed sheets blowing in the wind, Jennifer and I spoke about her cause and why it is important to get involved.

[CLICK FOR  
JENNIFER MCCOLM'S  
BIOGRAPHY](#)

► **Jennifer, when did you open your first farmers market and why?**

I opened the first market about 12 years ago and it was for a fundraiser. I was asked by my community to do a fundraiser and I decided to do a farmers market. Everybody loved it so much and it went so well that I thought, I actually really like this. This is something I could probably do, and it really turned out great.

► **Are you a farmer, Jennifer?**

I am. I am a certified organic farmer.

► **And what does that mean exactly?**

It means that there is a third-party company that comes out and actually tests the soil. They find out exactly what I have used in terms of manure or compost. And the difference between certified organic and organic is there is a third-party that comes out and checks...because you can say you are "organic" and not be.

► **You have now opened over 20 farmers markets. Is it a full-time job for you?**

It is definitely a full time job. I have also been launching Jennifer McCollm Certified which is my new company.

► **What is it that you do at Jennifer McCollm Certified?**

I am noticing that there is so much "green washing" going on. There are so many people saying this is organic, this is natural, this is green, and you don't know what the best choice is. It is difficult. Are these companies doing what they say they are doing? And so that was the purpose of establishing Jennifer McCollm Certified, not only for use with my produce and in farmers markets, but also services and products to say, "this is the best choice and this is why: I have rated it, I have tested it, I have used it and here is why I think it is the best product to use." I am basically certifying what a company says they are doing.

► **What does the future hold for you?**

I hope it is what it holds for all of us and that is a sustainable, green future.

► **Why have farmers markets and organic food and living become so fashionable?**

I think it is a movement. When I started 12 years ago, it was difficult to educate people about eating something from the ground, knowing where your food comes from, understanding the seasons, understanding what fruits and vegetables go with each season. I have watched it become a movement, but it isn't your Birkenstock wearing, Berkeley hippie group anymore. It's like BMW or Prius-driving people who are chairmen of corporations. It's a different group of people who are green now. I am writing a book about defining the new green.

► **Do you see farmers markets and organic food evolving as a result of this?**

Over ten years, farmers markets have more than tripled in numbers. There are over 350 just in California. I see it getting only bigger and greater. I think every community should have its own farmers markets and take us back to the days when we went down and got fresh food and cooked it. What a concept! They are taking us back in time a little bit when things were a little slower and things were a little bit more one-on-one and social—slowing things down a bit.

► **How would you define your own eco-style when it comes to fashion?**

I buy a lot of vintage stuff, I collect Victorian lace garments and I really try to buy sustainable (fashion) especially for my kids.

► **How can women be eco friendly, fashionable and stylish all at the same time?**

It is getting easier. I have a new campaign that I am launching called "Just Do One Thing Green" and the idea is just do something. Like, if you went out and bought a pair of jeans and put it with something reusable. I do a lot of old and new and mixing and matching and hand things down to my kids and friends. I buy a lot of vintage stuff and mix it up and I think I have a certain kind of style. I think you can do it.

► **How and where can consumers find eco-friendly clothes and accessories?**

There is a store I go to in Topanga Canyon called Hidden Treasures and it is vintage. A lot of it is reusing stuff. It is a good way to go. Most of the big companies are coming out with organic, bamboo, sustainable clothing. Target has it, Wal-Mart has it. Patagonia is a good company to work with. If you go online and Google, it is definitely out there.

► **Who do you think exemplifies eco-friendly style?**

Julia Roberts, Brad Pitt, Darryl Hannah. Darryl Hannah has a great style and really eco-conscious, in terms of being true to what she is doing. Kim Basinger is up there as well.

► **Where do you see the future of eco-consciousness headed in relation to style and fashion?**

I think it is going to be a key component. Not just for fashion but for everything. If you are not in this green movement, you are going to be left behind. So I think it is going to be a necessity, a must-have at some point.

► **How can one person make a difference in this eco-movement?**

Get my Organic Farmers Market Shopping Bag and get rid of the plastic. A reusable bag is the way to go. Change a light bulb, go to farmers markets, buy things locally, and reuse things. Being aware of your carbon footprint and the impact you are having on the environment. Just little things—it all adds up.

# ELLE eco-style Station



In May, ELLE brought eco-friendly style to Farmer's Markets throughout Los Angeles. A fashionable cabana attracted thousands of style and beauty-savvy passersby, who sampled products from Birkenstock, Juice Beauty, SoyJoy, and Burt's Bees.



1. Free samples of Soy Joy's organic health bars 2. Birkenstock's new Madrid and Gizeh lines in a lush summer palette 3. Juice Beauty's organic skincare line juxtaposed with fresh produce 4. Juice Beauty's advertising and product line are featured 5. Certified estheticians offered free hand massages with Juice Beauty hand lotion 6. The ELLE Eco-Style Station gets underway 7. Burt's Bees gives free samples of its signature organic lip balm 8. Birkenstock sandals in vibrant orange 9. A Birkenstock display next to locally-grown fresh flowers 10. & 11. Eco-friendly samples are distributed to the crowds.



To learn more about the Farmer's Market in Los Angeles, please visit: [www.rawinspiration.org](http://www.rawinspiration.org) or [www.jenniferferrymccolm.com](http://www.jenniferferrymccolm.com)



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