

## Buy American Mention of the Week

Despite patriotic pledge, Walmart threatens to destroy another American-made company

By Roger Simmermaker

November 27, 2013

Back in February, I wrote a 'Buy American Mention of the Week' article applauding Walmart's announcement that the huge retailer was planning on stocking its shelves with \$50 billion of American-made merchandise over the next decade while hiring 100,000 veterans.

Many Americans, who have avoided Walmart for years because it carries so many Chinese-made products when quality American alternatives available at competitive prices, were skeptical at best that Walmart's new message was little more than a public relations stunt.

Even if it wasn't, I wrote back in February, "Walmart won't need any increase in consumer traffic to sell those \$50 billion of American-made goods over the next 10 years, and they won't need new customers to keep the 100,000 newly hired veterans employed."

Well, as it turns out, Walmart has continued its practice of canning American-made companies in favor of companies that do nothing but import its products from China.

I was recently contacted by the director of sales at ENER-GEL Insoles, who told me his company's story about how Walmart recently decided to stop carrying ENER-GEL's American-made insoles, opting instead to exclusively carry Chinese-made Dr. Scholl's insoles.

The decision was devastating for family-owned ENER-GEL, which had a mutually beneficial business relationship with Walmart for over 18 years. You see, after many years of growth, and even expanding their factory production by 5,000 square feet in 2003 to meet demand from Walmart, 95 percent of ENER-GEL's business eventually came from Walmart.

Now that Walmart will only sell Dr. Scholl's insoles, which produces all of them in China, ENER-GEL is scrambling to keep the company going and to avoid the nightmare of having vastly underutilized production capacity.

I told ENER-GEL that of course I could not make up for lost sales resulting from being shunned by Walmart, but I would carry many of its products in my [USA Shop](#) and ask readers of my 'Buy American Mention of the Week' articles to consider [ENER-GEL products](#).

Maybe you've been wearing aftermarket insoles, but have previously chosen ENER-GEL's competitors. If you have, you might want to check the label, as 95 percent of the companies that compete with ENER-GEL make their insoles in China.

Or maybe you have never tried aftermarket insoles before, instead relying on the thin and inadequate insoles from shoe and boot manufacturers.

Regardless if you've worn aftermarket insoles in the past or not, I think you'll find that your feet will thank you when you step into a pair of shoes or boots with [ENER-GEL insoles](#) in them.

[ENER-GEL Cool Gel Light](#) is a dual layer insole that is 30 percent lighter and cooler than other dual gel insoles, with plenty of comfort and Blue Activated Gel for cushioning and energy return.

[ENER-GEL Work](#) insoles are made with a unique blend of materials to provide industrial strength whether you're just walking or working on hard surfaces. These will be a welcome addition to your American-made work boots if you wear them like I do.

[ENER-GEL Cushion Maxx](#) is the ultimate insole when you need long-lasting and uncompromising superior comfort. Ideal for tired and aching feet, these will also help reduce stress on your feet and knees.

[ENER-GEL Green Earth](#) insoles are environmentally friendly and use soybean oil instead of petroleum in the polyurethane foam. ENER-GEL is the only company to offer this alternative in its insoles.

You can purchase these fine American-made insole products at the [USA Shop](#) for just \$9.95 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling.

The folks at ENER-GEL know that small manufacturing companies are vital to the growth and prosperity of America. Over the past 20 years, they've created American jobs and purchased raw materials, packaging, and equipment from other American companies.

Walmart's dismissal of this family-owned American company will unfortunately have job-loss ripple effects on these other domestic producers beyond ENER-GEL unless patriotic-minded Americans move to support them when possible.

Most polls continue to show an overwhelming percentage of Americans prefer to buy American products when given the choice, especially when price and quality are similar, precisely like it is in the case of ENER-GEL insoles.

It's sad to see Walmart use favorable consumer polls to play the 'Made in USA' card and give the perception of creating American jobs with one hand while destroying them with the other.

I hope you'll consider patronizing [ENER-GEL insoles](#), and fight back against Walmart's behind-the-scenes bucking of the Buy American trend.

\*\*\*\*\*

Roger Simmermaker is the author of *How Americans Can Buy American* and the award-winning *My Company 'Tis of Thee: 50 Patriotic American Companies American Consumers Should Know About* ([Axiom Business Book Awards](#)), and writes 'Buy American Mention of the Week' articles for wnd.com and his website [www.howtobuyamerican.com](http://www.howtobuyamerican.com). Roger has a degree in Electronics Engineering Technology, is president of his local Machinists Union, has been a frequent guest on Fox News, CNN, and MSNBC, and has been quoted in *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, and *Business Week* among many other publications.