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The rubber tree, *Hevea brasiliensis*, may have its roots in Brazil, but its impact is global. All-natural latex rubber has a long history that stretches over the course of centuries and continents; the native of South America was introduced to Southeast Asia in the late 19th century where it continues to flourish and produce the majority of the latex used today. To tap a rubber tree, only a slight cut is made, to avoid damaging the tree and reducing its growth and output; the latex is collected and then processed by vulcanization, a procedure which traditionally involves heating the latex to cure it more quickly and makes the end product, rubber, more flexible. The process also changes the latex chemically, which puts people at less of a risk for allergic reactions and making rubber ideal for many products, including children's toys.

Why all the rubber rigmarole? Vermont-based **Rich Frog Industries** has a line-up of all-natural latex toys which includes the Original Rubber duck, along with its sitting counterpart and other adorable variations, Squeaky Frogs and more. Once mature, the rubber tree can be harvested for around 25 years before production decreases. Even after the latex is tapped, it continues to be an excellent material source: its timber is widely used to make a broad variety of goods. Rich Frog's charming **Dragonfly Whistles** are made from the eco-friendly and renewable resource. This "green" resource continues to be a vital asset, from which comes a large range of materials and finished products. The usefulness of the rubber tree and the many products that stem from it make it undeniably the Original giving tree! Contact John Gallagher at 802.865.9225 or John@richfrog.com.