

Indian health ingredients market to get a push in Europe

Saturday, November 11, 2006 -- Food and Beverage News

Like the European consumers, finding alternative ways to the growing health concerns has become a priority. In the Indian context, how far does it represent a break from the past, asks Bosky Christopher.

Excerpts from an interview with Dr Jayant Deshpande, VP Technical, OmniActive Health Technologies Pvt Ltd, on what to expect of Hi Europe.

On the break from past

OmniActive: There is increase in the percentage of population who are aware of health promoting ingredients. This also has a bearing on their affordability. More and more people are taking interest in health promoting OTC products in supermarkets and pharmacies. It is certainly a significant improvement over the past.

On India as emerging market

OmniActive: In the past, the vast majority of population was not even aware of health ingredients. Spending their earnings on improving one's health or on preventing disease, was unimaginable. With the increase in the earning capacity, more and more people are thinking seriously about the nutritional value of their food. Health ingredient market is bound to grow steadily in near future.

On the new trends

OmniActive: Heart diseases, diabetes, anemia among women, malnutrition in children are major health concerns in India. Health ingredients in these categories will receive ready acceptance in Indian context. Obesity, cancer and hair loss, eye problems are other categories that will see increasing attention among the health conscious.

On opportunities and projections

OmniActive: Europe, Japan and American countries are eagerly outsourcing the health ingredients from India due to the cost factor. However, standardising the ingredients from natural source to the satisfaction of these countries will be a great challenge. Another challenge will be to provide adequate, reliable clinical data for the health benefits to enable the formulators to have a label claim.

On issues and challenges

OmniActive: First-of-all creating awareness about the health benefits of the ingredients is a daunting task. Use of popular medias for promotion such as television and ads in magazines are cost intensive. Secondly, the cost factor - in order to attract large percent of population, the health ingredients need to be affordably priced.

On Hi Europe

OmniActive: Our exhibit shall include products such as carotenoids for eye health and as antioxidants, Curcumin, Green tea, Capsaicin, Fish oil preparations etc. The major emphasis will be on novel delivery forms for these ingredients that are user friendly as well as highly bioavailable. At Hi Europe we plan to launch Capsaicin in a novel delivery form, Zeaxanthin in vegetarian beadlet form, Lutein and Zeaxanthin in cold water dispersible form, Lutein beadlets in 10%, 25% strengths, and Lutein esters in 20% as beadlets.

On investment in R&D

OmniActive: OmniActive's R&D centres at different locations are recognised by DSIR. The R&D expenditure is well above 5% of the sales, which is highest among the mid sized nutraceutical companies in India. Multicarotenoid preparations, novel delivery systems for products such as curcumin, lutein, betacarotaxanthin, fish oil, etc are some of the products under development.

On leveraging opportunities

OmniActive: Indian manufacturers have vast natural resource of the ingredients and enjoy the benefit of low cost and educated manpower. With these advantages, Indian manufactures will be able to supply the ingredients in a cost-effective manner. Improvement in infrastructure for carrying out standardisation of the natural extracts has enabled the Indian manufacturers to satisfy the needs of buyers from the West and Japan. High quality clinical trial centres are now operating in India to provide the necessary clinical data at an affordable cost.