

Skin care industry welcomes Botaneco's technology

((CALGARY, ALBERTA)) **Calgary's Chinook winds may be tough on the skin, but a** revolutionary technology developed in this Western Canadian city is transforming the way North American manufacturers configure personal care products that keep skin smooth and healthy, says Andrew Baum, president and CEO, SemBioSys Genetics Inc., the parent company of Botaneco Specialty Ingredients Inc.

A wholly-owned subsidiary of SemBioSys, Botaneco has leveraged a SemBioSys-patented technology that enables personal care product manufacturers to make use of a plant-based emulsion instead of petroleum by-products, says Baum. Marketed as Hydresia™, the product is a renewable base for moisturizers, body lotions, hand and body washes, fragrances and sunscreens.

Botaneco, which manufactures Hydresia™ in Calgary, also has a sales and marketing division in Pennsylvania. Hydresia™ is being used in products made by 12 companies, including Burt's Bees, which markets Earth-friendly personal care products.

"Our process extracts the natural emulsifiers formed in the shell of seeds. Research shows these natural emulsifiers improve skin health and consumers prefer the way they feel on their skin," adds Baum.

Manufacturers like the product because it is much easier and faster to mix with other products.

The patented process can also be used to generate skin care ingredient that carry specific vitamins or novel ingredients, including topical pharmaceuticals.

"This technology allows us to develop what will be a portfolio of ingredient systems that will change the way personal care products are made and used," notes Baum. Their first ingredient system uses safflower seeds to produce its natural emulsion, but the technology will work with any seed. Baum expects companies to develop products based on specific seeds, such as cucumber or hemp.

"We anticipate that Botaneco's specialty ingredients will be sought by a variety of companies in the personal care market," says Jim Hardin, an investment manager with AVAC Ltd., a private, not-for-profit company that invested in Botaneco and its parent company, SemBioSys.

"The skills required to be successful in the personal care industry are fundamentally different than what we need to develop products for the pharmaceutical industry, where SemBioSys is moving towards clinical trials with several products," notes Baum. "For that reason, AVAC's investment was critical in that it provided the cash and support Botaneco needed to move towards commercialization at a reasonable rate."

SemBioSys made its name in global biotechnology by patenting a system to produce, extract and purify specific proteins in plants. The proprietary process enabled the development of protein-based pharmaceuticals for use in the treatment of diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

AVAC invests in early-stage technology businesses and commercially-relevant agricultural research that expands value-added industry in Alberta. "Botaneco and SemBioSys are good examples of how AVAC helps Alberta-based companies build success in the life sciences sector," says Hardin.

-30-

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