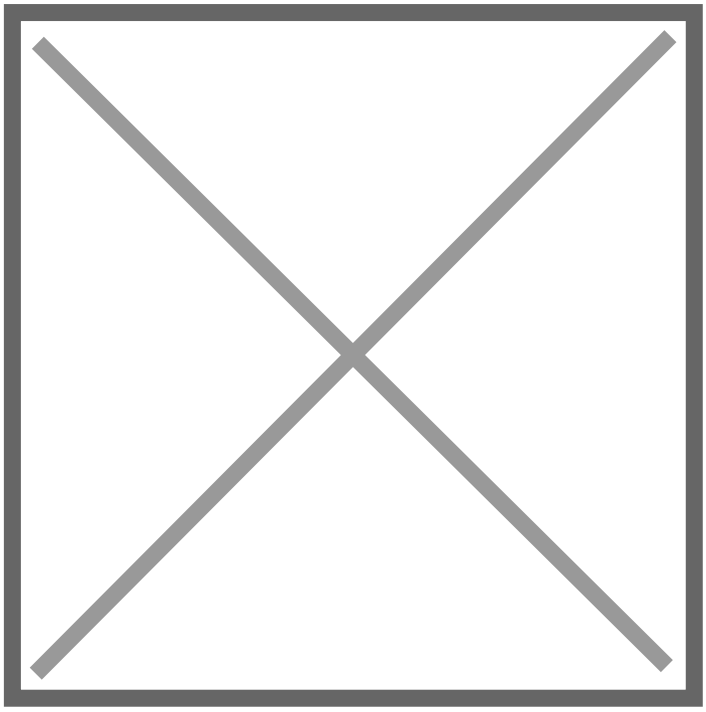
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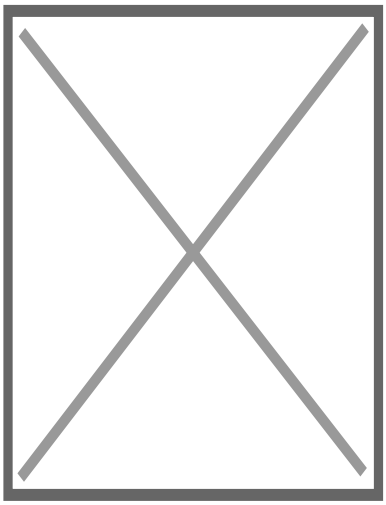
Poultry Passion

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Poultry Passion

Venkateshwara Hatcheries dominates the Indian poultry vaccines market with a share of over 60 percent.



Venkateshwara Hatcheries

Business: Engaged in R&D, production and export of vaccines and diagnostics kits

CEO: Anuradha Desai (Chairperson)

Biotech Revenue: Rs 190.50 crore

Start-up Year: 1971

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Website: www.venkys.com

Venkateshwara Hatcheries Pvt Ltd (VHL), a group company of the VH Group, continued to dominate the Indian poultry vaccine market with a market share of over 60 percent. "The biotech sales revenue for the year 2006-07 stood at Rs 410 crore, against the previous year's sales of Rs 280 crore. In 2004-2005, the biotech sales turnover stood at Rs 188 crore. During the last financial year, its biologicals sales revenue touched Rs 296 crore and this includes exports, internal use and selling in the domestic market. The rest was from the sales of Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) eggs, which are used in the production of vaccines," said OP Singh, CEO, Venkateshwara Hatcheries Group. However, industry officials say that the current poultry vaccine market is about Rs 130 crore, with Venkateshwara Hatcheries leading the market followed by Indovax and Hester Pharmaceuticals with some imports.

The Rs 3,185-crore VH Group is the largest fully integrated poultry group in Asia. It has many divisions and subsidiary companies, which are working on developing biotech products. Looking ahead, it plans expansion into the related upstreaming and downstreaming areas to cater to the increasing demand for all animal and human vaccines. In 2006-07, the company increased its investments in R&D from 17 percent to 22.8 percent of its total sales revenue so as to develop future products.

Besides being into poultry vaccines business and livestock management and healthcare, VHL is now working on launching vaccines for large animals and human beings and also diagnostic kits. Hence it has set up separate division called BV Biologicals.

BV Biologicals, specialized in livestock management and healthcare, has set up India's largest biocontainment plant at the Rajiv Gandhi Biotech Park, Hinjewadi, Pune. It is a BSL-3 Category Biosafety level plant with state-of-the-art containment processes and has closed operating systems with carefully monitored functional procedures that make it one of the safest bio-containment facilities. The plant will accelerate important scientific work to develop vaccines for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) as per WHO and cGMP norms. It will have a highly controlled environment in which vaccine production and testing can be carried out using state-of-the-art technology to respond more effectively to events such as an animal disease outbreak and food safety concerns. OP Singh said, "Our aim is to explore the challenges posed by bioterrorism and other emerging infectious diseases in the country. Biosecurity and biocontainment strategies will help us reduce the risk of disease and ensure that microorganisms don't thrive and proliferate to the community or environment."

In addition, the facility also has a potential to provide containment for any kind of virus that is identified as a threat to the nation. Diseases such as anthrax, SARS, avian influenza, can be quickly and safely controlled through this facility by means of respective vaccine development. The plant has high-end utility systems, autoclaves, sanitizable surface, special biosafety cabinets, and contingency plans to take care of any eventuality.

BV Biologicals will manufacture and market biotech products engineered to suit the large animal health sector, mainly cattle, sheep and goat. It has entered into a joint venture with DeLaval for marketing mastitis prevention products. Under the MoU, DeLaval will provide technical support to BV Biologicals for products such as Dipal, Dip Cup, California Mastitis Test Kit and California Mastitis Test Reagent. BV Biologicals will operate and supply the products to all customer segments in India.

VHL has also entered into a tie-up with a US-based company for biodiagnostics and biogeneric products. The aim of this tie-up is to bring in certain new molecules for diseases such as cancer. "We will roll out three diagnostic kits for HIV, ovulation and cancer markers in the next six months time," said OP Singh.

VHL is also investing in new vaccines and biotherapeutics for child and adult immunization. There are plans to enter the protein drug sector as well. The team at BV Biologicals is working on human vaccines for ailments that afflict a majority of the common populace.

VH Group exports its products to SAARC countries, South Asia, Middle East, Japan, Europe and Africa. It sells poultry vaccines from Ventri Biologicals and vitamin premixes, therapeutic products, growth promoters and dewormers from its animal health products division for the poultry industry ensuring better health and enhancing performance in breeders as well as commercial layers and broilers.

Ventri Biologicals, the vaccine division of the VH Group is a leader in poultry vaccines business in India. Started in 1980, the division produces vaccines for Marek's disease and Newcastles's disease. The plant was built in collaboration with US-based Tri Bio Laboratories, a world leader in vaccine technology and research. Its vaccine plant is acknowledged as one of the most modern plants and is capable of meeting the demands of the projected growth of the Indian poultry industry. Backed by extensive and modern research and development facilities, Ventri Biologicals is constantly engaged in developing new

generation vaccines, to combat emerging bacterial and viral diseases. It produces vaccines conforming to British Pharmacopeia and other international standards.

About 180 employees are working in this division.

The division works in close association with the Poultry Diagnostic and Research Center (PDRC) that provides the technical service and carries out disease surveillance across the country. VHL has set up 87 service centers and seven research stations across the length and breadth of the country. This helps in understanding the customer needs and relating new developments to fulfill these needs. It produces live and inactivated viral vaccines using complex cell culture and egg adapted technology with highly immunogenic vaccine virus strains in sterile atmosphere, using Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) eggs. For bacterial inactivated vaccines, it has adopted the most advanced programmed biofermentation technology. Ventri Biologicals provides a wide range of poultry vaccines, some of which have been introduced for the first time as solutions to the ongoing problems of the Indian poultry industry.

Its Venkys (India) Ltd has entered into a technical collaboration with US-based Spafas for the production of Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) eggs. It is the second largest SPF egg producer in the world and the only one in Asia to manufacture Specific Pathogen Free eggs which have wide application in the production of variety of embryo based and cell culture derived viral vaccines, cell line development and research work in the area of biomedical and biosciences. It produces over 10 million such SPF eggs per annum.