

Sartorius India launches new purification products

11 October 2005 | News



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In September Sartorius launched its two products Sartobind (Membrane Adsorber) and Virosart CPV (Virus Clearance Filter). The senior management team from Sartorius, John Pleasants, director, technical support, Asia Pacific, Dr Uwe Gottschalk, vice president-purification, Sartorius AG, and Dr Christian Manzke, head of application development, Sartorius AG, were in Bangalore and they along with Anil P Kariath, managing director, Sartorius India, shared Sartorius' plans and thoughts with Ch.Srinivas Rao of BioSpectrum.

What is the concept of this new portfolio of purification products?

Biomanufacturing is characterized by the fact that fermentation development is setting the pace in terms of productivity through cell line, media, and reactor development. And today manufacturers are under pressure to look at their performance on a cost per gram basis. Advances have been made in upstream processing and productivity gains have been made in disciplines such as batch culture and fermentation, even though industrial biotechnology still uses dilute solutions and large volumes. The limiting step in production was seen to be downstream processing.

Realizing the need to provide the biopharmaceuticals industry with an integrated portfolio of technology products, we have worked to build a comprehensive and integrated solution. This includes the provision of fermentation, separation and automation systems as well as training and validation support.

Our purification portfolio comprises powerful technologies for cell removal at high biomass, bioseparation strategies on the basis of membrane adsorbers and an orthogonal platform for the reliable removal of pathogens and other process-derived contaminants. These are the underlying attributes of Sartorius Purification Technologies' innovations in the downstream processing arena.

Is there an opportunity for your new purification products in India as the industry is too small here?

The market scenario exists into two areas-in protein therapeutics by self development and in the conventional products like vaccines. This capacity for conventional vaccines has improved 10 times. With the opening up of African market, there is a big gap for supply and companies who use new technologies can expand faster.

India may be a typical small biotech world. But things are moving forward at a rapid pace. Several companies are working in the monoclonal antibodies area. Recombinant monoclonal antibodies (Mabs) have continued to increase in importance as therapeutics for the treatment of cancer and autoimmune diseases. But, the problem is large scale production of these molecules and requires a good manufacturing process. Besides, the biotech sector is moving from antibiotic expression to antibodies. So the Indian is an important customer.

Further, India is the second most important market, besides Japan. The customers here are relatively open minded. Hence India is undoubtedly a big opportunity. Further within our organization, India is one of the very few places outside of the US, which has people of caliber to support and talk to the customers.

"We are bringing out specialized products for Proteomics research"

Navneet Trehan, director, India Operations, Axygen spoke about the new developments taking place at Axygen.

Which are the new products being launched by Axygen?

During the past few years Axygen R&D team have been actively involved in research work for bringing out newer versions of products, which can be used in genomics and proteomics research. Now we are ready to launch a whole new range of purification kits DNA Markers and Crystallography products. The isolation and purification kits include plasmid, miniprep, mediprep, maxiprep kits (known as Axyprep), multisource genomic DNA, blood genomic DNA, body fluid viral DNA and RNA, PCR clean up and a range of RNA kits. We are also bringing specialized products for proteomics research, as this is where the future lies. Our protein crystallization plates have already been launched and the other products will soon be available. The continuous research efforts of our core research team based in Union City, California, has assured us that many new products will be available in a short span and they are going to be in line with the best. So with an initial focus on lab plastic consumables, we have expanded our product range to biotech equipments/instruments and now to kits.

Axygen acquired Labnet International last year. How has it benefited Axygen?

The takeover of Labnet was the biggest acquisition of Axygen till date. Now we have finalized the takeover completely and Labnet International Inc now functions as a group company of Axygen. The product range of Labnet is very wide and its instruments range alone consists of not less than 70-80 products. Some of the important products include centrifuges, liquid handling systems, incubators, water baths, electrophoresis units, a range of shakers and rockers and hybridization ovens. Today there are very few companies in the world that sell such a broad range of products under one roof. Now by virtue of our wide distribution network in over 80 countries, the Labnet products are easily accessible to all our customers. By the end of 2005, we are aiming to increase our international turnover by more than double.

In India, Labnet was not very well represented, but after its acquisition, its first year in the country was very successful. We have done about 140-150 Labnet installations in India in just one year.

Axygen also represents several foreign principals in India. How is this segment of its business growing?

We are proud of our prestigious channel partnerships like Corning, Nichiryo, Princeton Separations, Vitlab GmbH among others and our commitment, dedication and devotion to them is 100 percent. That is the reason why the combination has grown many folds in last many years and we expect to grow further because our strengthened ties have given us better confidence. As a whole hearted commitment to our customers for giving after sales service we have come out with a full fledged calibration and repairing facility for Nichiryo range of products supported by all spares and technologies. We will be in a position to give complete service support within 4-5 days to all our customers. This facility has been made operational since the first

of September.

Biotech India to distribute RayBiotech's Antibody Array

Vinaya K Dubey, director, sales and marketing, Biotech India, elaborates on the company's new protein array product.

What are the new products added to the company's existing portfolio?

In 2005, Biotech India got the distributorship of products from the US based RayBiotech, Inc., the pioneer company in protein array. The company's Cytokine Antibody Array is expected to see great demand in the current era of proteomics. Incidentally this is the first commercially available protein array system in the world.

What are its salient features?

Using this array system, scientists can easily, rapidly and accurately identify the expression profiles of many cytokines in a single experiment. In addition to this, Cytokine Antibody Array doesn't require special equipment and available for human, mouse and rat. It is affordable and cost effective enough for routine use. Only 100 µl of a sample is adequate for detection of over 120 cytokines.

This system is highly reproducible, specific, sensitive and can detect most proteins at picograms levels.

This system speeds up your discovery process by conserving precious samples and saving time and money.

Rolly Dureha