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Tex Biosciences was the first Indian company to indigenously manufacture and supply enzymes to the leather market. Its products were import substitutes at a time when all leather enzymes were being imported, and tanners faced problems in foreign exchange availability for imports. Tex Biosciences is one among few organizations to manufacture all its enzymes in house and formulate high performance enzyme mixes for better productivity in animal farming.

BioSpectrum interviewed Mr Aravindha Krishnamachari, director and chief operations executive, Tex Biosciences (P) Ltd, to get insights into the company's current and future plans. Mr Krishnamachari also heads the production department at Tex Biosciences with emphasis on supply chain integration and lean manufacturing practices.

What is the contribution of Tex Biosciences in the area of Industrial Biotechnology and leather chemical products?

Tex Biosciences has performed strongly in the area of Industrial biotechnology with operations in leather, animal feed, textiles and pulp and paper Industry. With the leather industry, Tex Biosciences was the first Indian company to indigenously manufacture and supply enzymes to the leather market. Our products were import substitutes at a time when all leather enzymes were being imported, and tanners faced problems in foreign exchange availability for imports.

We are one of the few organizations to manufacture all our enzymes in house and formulate high performance enzyme mixes for better productivity in animal farming.

What is the current market trend in India for leather chemical products?

The Indian leather Industry is facing challenges that need to be overcome. There is raw material shortage that is affecting tanners productivity. New environmental regulations require a change in mindset and processing requirements from customers. We are seeing customers genuinely being interested in adopting greener technology and stricter European norms

in leather processing.

We take our market leader position in leather enzymes responsibly and seriously. We have a very experienced and an able technical team, that is assisting our customers in enzyme usage that extends outside the traditional roles in leather processing. Some of our enzyme inventions are unique to the market such as complete elimination of sulphides and lime in unhairing process, converting dead stock of finished leather into new material and increasing the penetration of chemicals into leather.

What are your latest innovations and what are their practical applications?

Our innovations extend to all the markets we operate. With animal feed, we have launched a protease based enzyme mix that helps farmers and feed mills reduce protein cost in feed. With rising soya prices, farmers are looking for innovations that help them manage feed costs while delivering good productivity. Our product has been able to successfully deliver on its promise.

In leather, we have launched a very successful stable liquid enzyme formulation that allows dried skins and hides to be wetted for processing with a 75 per cent reduction in water usage and 200 per cent reduction in time. In pulp and paper Industry, we have introduced an enzyme mix that helps recycle juice cartons by separating aluminum foil from cardboard.

What are the eco-friendly alternatives that you inculcate in products?

Our company mantra is "Nurturing Nature" and all our products reflect this, be it enzymes or the chemicals we manufacture. A few such examples of our commitment to nature include our enzyme formulations in leather which eliminates solvent usage in leather degreasing process and an enzyme mix that helps in better dye penetration in textile industry.

Can you tell us about your collaborations both in India and abroad?

Tex Biosciences has export presence in 22 countries across the globe. We are now working on partnership with a South American company for commercialization of enzyme usage in Biofuels. We have also tied up with a company in Africa and are exploring setting up a manufacturing base there.

What sets apart Tex Biosciences in the area of innovation from the rest of the companies in the same arena?

They say necessity is the mother of all inventions. This is exactly what motivates and drives us. We employ experts in all the markets we operate and these experts are engaged in exploring newer applications for enzyme usage along with solving existing problems with biotech products.

We also take our leadership position in the market very seriously and constantly look at areas where we can innovate and offer value to customers rather than focus merely on sales and profit generation from our leadership position.

Would you like to share any recent interesting discoveries made by Tex Biosciences?

We have made a valuable discovery in lowering enzyme production costs through culture and process optimization, the details of which are confidential. Through this discovery, we have been able to significantly lower our production costs and offer value to customers.

What are your visions, plans and goals for Tex Biosciences?

Tex Biosciences is a family owned and run organization. Founded in 1976 by my father Mr R P Krishnamachari, the company has seen growth and enhancement of its reputation in all the markets it operates.

The company aims to further expand its reach into newer markets and function as India's leading industrial enzyme manufacturer with home grown technology by 2020. This vision and determination is shared by our valuable employees who see themselves as a part of our family.

Who are your competitors?

Industrial enzyme manufacturers domestically and internationally are our competitors. More than competition, we focus on the customers who we serve and constantly seek improvement in product offering to bring better value to them.

How is the company doing financially?

Tex Biosciences has been doing very well financially and we have been financially inspected and certified by ICRA. We have

doubled our turnover in the last 4 years along with good numbers and ratios in all critical parameters.

What are the significant investments made by Tex Biosciences?

We believe that a world class manufacturing facility alone can deliver high quality products. As an ISO 9001-2008 certified organization, we are committed to maintaining a high quality production facility. We have invested over 14 Crore (INR) in the last two years to triple our fermentation capacity along with necessary Utility and Down Stream processing equipments.

We now have dedicated large scale semi automated fermenters which are enzyme specific. Further, our production plant holds exclusive finished goods manufacturing and packing lines for all the markets we operate.

In the midst of economic recession, how is the growth sector looking for Tex Biosciences?

We have gone for large scale expansion in the midst of an economic recession. This is primarily due to the confidence we have in our ability and our conviction that we offer value to customers. We believe that once the markets pick up, we would be best suited to serve the increased demands through the capacity we have built up during the lean period.

We also seek to enter the contract manufacturing segment by offering clients our experience and facility in manufacturing biotech products that are required by them. We believe that our experience in operations and the cost factor that we bring to the table would make us more lucrative as a CMO.

How is Tex Biosciences involved in CSR activities?

We are an ISO 9001-2008 certified organization that is involved heavily in social responsibility by contributing to the society. The founder, Mr R P Krishnamachari, and the company - both are involved in running schools, education and health projects throughout Tamil Nadu.

What can we look for from Tex Biosciences in the future?

Tex Biosciences seeks to make a name for itself in the Biotech Industry in India. We have a spring in our step and confident that we would achieve our vision and mission by 2020.