

AROGYA'07

'International Meet of TM Regulators & Industry'

Welcome Address & ASU Global Scenario

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Ayurveda is the most ancient system of healthcare. India enjoys a rich heritage of more than 1000 years of knowledge in Ayurveda. The treasure our ancestors have left back for us is for our use and benefit. India's share in the export of herbals is USD 63 billion which is just 0.2% of the total global herbal market. So there is obviously vast scope for Indian manufacturers for entering the growing world wide opportunity of business in Herbal Pharmaceutical field.

We already have know-how and the development of the products is done on the flora and fauna available in India since ages. So we have the basic resources and with proper channelising of our efforts, we can tap the opportunities worldwide.

A lot of brain storming is being done on how we can facilitate the exports of herbals. In many countries our products can be registered and thus can gain the necessary reliability for their export. The registration guidelines for every country are different and unique. Hence a thought should also be given to the possibility of meeting such requirements before identification of market for our product. Global awareness for quality is high and we must emphasize on quality building into the product. The manufacturing facilities and infrastructure should comply with the GMP standards. Our own Drugs and Cosmetics Law and Rules define GMP for traditional medicinal products, in Schedule T and every effort should be made by each and every manufacturer so as to comply with these standards.

We also have to focus on standardization of herbal products. The products we offer are complex formulations and though many products are in use as traditional medicines or supplements over many years, we must seriously work towards their standardization. The current scenario calls for regulatory data and proofs of regulations for every product to be exported. Thus standardization of herbal products has immense importance for various registration procedures in foreign countries. We have an exceptional resource in form of scientific and technical personnel and we can very well achieve standardization of our herbal products. We need to identify institutions to undertake this project and the government should actively support such efforts.

Backward integration in the field of cultivation is an important task to be undertaken. This will ensure the right quality of the source material for our products and also timely supply in required quantity. There are co-operative societies of farmers that can be given this task. Educating the farmers about the required cultivation techniques and skills can facilitate streamlined supply through such co-operation.

Many academic institutes undertake research on plants and other natural resources for potential use as medicines. Herbal products have known to be safe and almost devoid of side-effects. But their development into viable remedies needs elaborate efforts. Various agencies have to work together in this regard including academic and research institute, government agencies at the State and Centre, industry as well as the ministry. Pharmaceutical Export Promotion Council i.e. PHARMEXCIL is ready to play a key role in this regards to act as coordinator and facilitator so as to initiate various efforts.

Right from cultivation of medicinal plants to exports of value added herbal formulations to International markets, opportunity is knocking India's door. We are confident that with conscious and systematic efforts, we can achieve excellent growth in this field which would help in earning valuable foreign exchange to the country. Simultaneously, it would make available to the ailing population of the world efficacious and safe medicines.

The natural products in broad spectrum include plants and their parts, herbal extracts, medicinal products, cosmetic, dietary formulation, nutraceuticals, cosmoceuticals etc. Different countries have different registration requirements for these products. Deliberations and cooperation towards harmonization of these guidelines at the level of ministry of health of different countries is need of the hour. Some steps are being taken in this regard - like the India-EU Joint Working Group. Similar efforts with other partner countries would be of help.

One more area wherein we have to focus is identification, collection, compilation, scrutiny, evaluation and dissemination of authentic market data regarding herbal products. All these steps carried out in a most scientific manner would lay foundation of India's growth in this field.

Pharmexcil emphasizes the importance and potential of Herbal Medicines and hence there is a separate Ayurveda Panel for issues related to it. Pharmexcil is already working on some of the areas identified and other associations working towards the same goal would also certainly contribute in these efforts. I reiterate Pharmexcil's wholehearted support in all the activities related to Ayurvedic and medicinal plants. We all, working together, will make India a strong force in the global natural product markets.

I am very happy to see the issue being discussed at various levels and to be a part of the process. Let us all come together and work towards making India a significant player in the Global Herbal Products Exporter.