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Strong Growth in Cosmeceuticals Market

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Increasing consumer concerns about health have triggered growing demand for cosmeceutical products. The market in the US is growing by around 10 to 15 per cent each year, and competition between companies to produce more effective products is intensifying, reports Health World Online.

Cosmeceutical products are a combination of cosmetics which can cleanse and beautify and pharmaceuticals which can cure and heal, according to Jennifer Sizemore, senior research associate at Technology Catalysts International, a Virginia-based consultancy.

Technology Catalysts tracks the cosmeceuticals market based on skin care, hair care and sun care categories. Products in the skin care market include those for anti-ageing, anti-wrinkle, skin lightening, and cellulite reduction. Hair care products include anti-dandruff, hair growth and hair thickening. Sun care products include sunscreens, sun blocks and sunless tanning.

"The most promising market sector from both a technological and financial viewpoint is skin care cosmeceuticals, which comprises over half the total cosmeceuticals market," said Sizemore. "The cosmeceuticals market, particularly skin care, continues to grow at about double the pace of the cosmetics and toiletries market in the US."

The annual growth rate for skin care cosmeceuticals is around seven to 10 percent, and sales have grown from \$980 million (€1.13bn) in 1995 to \$1.5 billion in 1999, reflecting the need of an ageing populace for more effective appearance-enhancing and age-defying skin cosmetics.

On the raw material side, combined US and West European consumption of anti-ageing skin care applications is estimated at between \$140 million and \$150 million in 2001, said Gillian S. Morris, manager, chemicals at Kline & Company in New Jersey.

Products such as vitamins, polysaccharides, botanicals, proteins and enzymes/coenzymes are all used in anti-ageing creams, according to Kline & Co. *"Vitamins account for 65 per cent of the total active category. Among them, vitamin A (including retinol and retinal palmitate) is the leading product accounting for 50 per cent of total vitamin consumption value and five to 10 per cent of consumption volume,"* said Morris.

"Vitamin E, both natural and synthetic tocopherols, ranks second with around 40 per cent of the total consumption value and 70 to 75 per cent of consumption volume, while the rest of the balance are accounted for by provitamin B5 panthenol, and vitamin C and derivatives," she continued.

Aside from vitamins A, C and E, actives such as coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) and hydroxy acids continue to be popular because of their effectiveness and familiarity among consumers. Although enzymes/coenzymes account for only 5 per cent of the total actives consumed in anti-ageing skin care

applications, enzymes have been used in cosmetics as mild exfoliants for many years since most are derived from natural resources.

"Enzymes are receiving much attention from cosmetic and toiletry formulators because they can be used to stimulate skin cell regeneration, which can lead to anti-ageing performance properties," said Morris. "New techniques for enzyme stabilisation and effective delivery at the site of action should promote increased consumption."

CoQ10, also known as ubiquinone, is currently the most important coenzyme used in anti-ageing formulations. In skin care applications, CoQ10 is used as antioxidant to neutralise free radicals and prevent the damage that they cause. In oral care products, CoQ10 neutralises free radicals caused by bacteria and periodontal disease.

Another popular active ingredient in the anti-ageing skin care market is kinetin, also called N6-furfuryladenine, an antioxidant naturally found in the human body and in plants. Kinetin's use in skin care is currently patented by California's Senetek group, which has licensed the technology to a number of major cosmetics companies including Revlon, Body Shop and Allure Cosmetics.

Analysts place Senetek's total revenues from its kinetin sales and royalties at around \$8.1 million in 2001. In addition to kinetin, Senetek is also developing zeatin, a naturally occurring plant compound, for use in skin care products. The company is evaluating zeatin for use in treating sun-damaged skin and psoriasis.

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