

Natural Products Center Teams with Botanicals Trade Group for Training, Information Sharing

Contributed by Mitchell Diggs
05/26/2009

OXFORD, Miss., and SALT LAKE CITY - The National Center for Natural Products Research at the University of Mississippi and the United Natural Products Alliance have launched an agreement to share information on botanical products and provide training for faculty, students and representatives of the dietary supplement industry.

The two institutions have signed a memorandum of understanding to cooperate by:

- Providing botanical identity training for compliance with dietary supplement Good Manufacturing Practice;
- Exchanging of information, technical and scientific knowledge on botanical quality and safety standards for dietary supplements;
- Engaging in reciprocal visits for training and teaching of faculty, students and industry executives to increase competence and promote cooperation between commercial and academic leaders in the dietary supplement industry.

"There are still many issues related to botanical supplements that are unresolved, and this agreement will help to develop tools to address the quality and safety of botanical products," said Ikhlas Khan, a pharmacognocist and assistant director of NCNPR.

For nearly a decade, a team of NCNPR scientists has worked to test, analyze and authenticate botanical materials used in dietary supplements under an agreement with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition. Khan heads the natural products center's FDA Center for Excellence in Botanical Dietary Supplement Research.

UNPA and NCNPR share a deep interest in fostering opportunities for the nation's foremost natural products research center and the nation's leading commercial manufacturing center for dietary supplements, said Loren Israelsen, executive director of UNPA.

"Our relationship has already borne fruit," Israelsen said. "On May 15, Dr. Ikhlas Khan presented a workshop on botanical identification for over 50 senior quality assurance staff based in Utah."

Utah is recognized as the global center of dietary supplement manufacturing, with more than 125 companies engaged in the supply, manufacture, marketing, testing and sale of dietary supplements.

Headquartered in Salt Lake City, UNPA is a trade organization representing many of the world's leading dietary supplement companies. Founded in Utah in 1991, UNPA was instrumental in the passage of the 1994 Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act and continues to take a leadership position in regulatory issues and industry best

practices. For more information, go to <http://www.unpa.com>.

NCNPR, part of the UM School of Pharmacy, is a unique university-affiliated research center devoted to improving human health through the discovery, development, and safe and effective use of pharmaceuticals and supplements derived from natural products. For more information, go to <http://www.pharmacy.olemiss.edu/ncnpr/> .