



Talking Business: The Great Challenge

Store owners have been telling me stories lately about the quandary they see concerning ingredients in today's health food products. Apparently the debate is strong in many people's minds as to how to define their store on the issue of ingredients. People are more worried than I realized.

Our industry catapulted to success with a determination to provide the healthiest and most natural ingredients in food, body food and nutrition. As growth has moved us into the mainstream, we have seen a denigration of the quality standards that led us so well. The argument was made, somehow, that we must consider the issue of acceptable cost when attempting to convert the mainstream away from their mediocre purchase habits. We could do better for the largest mass of people, if we made the products "reasonable."

But many purists and smart business people are realizing that this trend did

not serve our better interest in many ways. Not only have some ingredients listings gotten so generic that it is easy to see them crossing over into pharmacy and grocery superstores, but there has been an obvious seepage of unhealthy substances into the food and body care ingredients panels that we sell in our "health food stores".

The good news is that many stores are aware, and are looking for a way forward. And as we see the pie sliced

TIP OF THE MONTH:

A Perfect Pair: Direct your customers to a one-two punch most effective against allergy season

Bluebonnet Mega-Bio C has equal parts Vitamin C + bioflavonoids in a Vcap and **Bluebonnet Super Quercetin** packs a whopping 500 mg quercetin + Vitamin C in each Vcap.

Sell them together and see the response

thinner and thinner with our market share being absumed, it is becoming clearer that we need to cater to the growing allergy, immuno-imbalanced market that is unfortunately so much on the rise in our polluted world. The question, from a business perspective, is "What to do?"

Certainly increasing the wheat-free and gluten free sections of your store — with signage, and aggressive promotions that let the large allergy-sensitive market know that they can one-stop shop more easily (and offer deals on these products — rare in most stores) — can help. Likewise, there should be a clear store focus on that possibly litigious subject of immunology. We are limited legally to what we can say on things "immune", but that is where the action is and most certainly will be in the future. Define this issue for your store—will there be a

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Talking Health: Rhodiola for Real?

The astute eye will learn a lot from the statement that both Herb Pharm and Bluebonnet have introduced a rhodiola product this year, one a standardized extract in V-caps and the other a liquid herbal extract. When these two fine companies add a product, you know that it has come of age.

Word out on the West Coast for years has been that rhodiola has become the herb of choice for performance athletes, but research shows rhodiola to be a superior adaptogen good for fatigue, depression, anemia, impotence, infections, work productivity and nervous system disorders. It also affects depression, the heart, immunity and cancer. Research shows rhodiola to be a winner for final exams, and mental stress.

R. rosacea L. is native to the traditional medicines of Russia and Scandanavia and is now an accepted part of the official herbal pharmacopeia of Russia, Sweden and Denmark. The most appropriate name is "Rhodiola rosacea", as there are many varieties of rhodiola. The rosacea species has been rigorously studied and certified safe through toxicology studies. Since 1960, more than 180 studies have been published. Initially the salidrosides were identified as active, but later it was discovered that the active ingredients of distinction were rosavin, rosin and rosarin. They can be classified as rosavins, and look for standardized extracts that have a minimum of 3% rosavins as this is what the human clinical studies were done on.

Bluebonnet Rhodiola Rosea Root extract is the first rhodiola to utilize a

combination of standardized freeze-dried extract and whole raw herb powder. This powerful blend is kept stabilized by FruitO₂X™, a fusion of high ORAC fruit extracts standardized for their polyphenol content. **Herb Pharm** uses the Russian-harvested whole root from the Arctic Circle, shade-dried and shipped whole to Oregon for extraction. The delicate rose flavor of the extract is one of the most beautifully unique flavors you will ever experience.

If you want to gain more depth on this phenomenal antioxidant herb, order a copy of *Arctic Root: The powerful new ginseng alternative*, by Carl Germano, Zakir Ramazanov (1999). While I strongly believe in going further, it is always wise to stick with science, and rhodiola is here to stay! *



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Notes: with the **Aloe Gold tablets**, the polysaccharide activity is still present

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CBS News: 'Raw Foods' made national TV on July 16 with a piece on 48 hours.

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The Great Challenge

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section for these products and is it clearly demarcated? How should the staff interact with consumers on this issue? Can a momentum be built to get consumers concerned about the health of their immune system?

Finally, get serious about the products that inhabit the bottom portions of the labels of your bodycare products. Propylene glycol does not belong in health food stores. The biggest dilemma is how to ignite renewed energy in pure and clean ingredients. People want to believe they are buying "good" because they are buying with you, but it is in our best long-term interest to continue educating them on the benefits of real natural foods. Certainly, superior quality products should be highly prominent, and should be promoted constantly. Let consumers know why they should spend more on their health. That is what we are all about. The market is changing, and new leaders are making important changes in what the health food store of the future will be. Quality counts. Let's all lead together. *

MARKETING IDEAS

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Call as often as necessary: we want to be of assistance

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