

The Production of Enzyme Based Products in Thailand & The Emerging Cosmetic & Personal Care Cottage Industry

Murray Hunter

There are a number of companies from the US and Europe, that are using enzymes in the production of personal care products, but still utilizing conventional surfactant bases, exploiting this 'niche' quite successfully.

The problem however is that the cost of production is very high in Western countries, making these very premium products, in terms of pricing. With some of these products, efficacy compared to conventional products is also an issue.

A large barrier to entry also exists to the large players in the industry, because of the complex logistics in gathering and standardizing the raw materials. It would require a completely different way of operating a company in sourcing, purchasing, manufacturing and marketing. Thus, at this point of time, it will remain one of the many curiosities and specialized market 'niches' of the cosmetic industry.

One thing this trend has achieved in conjunction with the opportunities the OTOP program has provided is the development of micro-enterprises in rural Thailand, where many people have developed a sense of self-esteem and self-reliance.

This presentation will address the current trends of locally produced enzymes and their use in Cosmetics by consumers who appreciate them for their basic efficacy, 'greenness' and the assistance their purchase gives low income, rural groups in Thai society. Examples of basic formulations will also be given.