

Nutrex: Top notch animal nutrition, innovation & expertise

This leading supplement maker defines itself through tireless innovation, a commitment to customers and a ready team of product development experts.

by Arianne M. PEREZ

Belgium-based Nutrex has been steadily carving its presence in the global market of animal nutrition since 1995, anchoring its activities on tireless innovation and customer support.

The company was founded by Christ Clarys who started his activities by exporting premixes and concentrates. During that time, Nutrex was a customer of Agrimex, a known supplier of feed additives in Western Europe. "Unfortunately, Mr. Clarys passed away in 1997. The company was then sold to Kuge Invest, a family owned holding company that also owns Agrimex. After the takeover and incorporation into the Kuge Invest group, it was then decided to put the initial focus of Nutrex on the export of feed additives, the core business of Agrimex," Kurt Van de Mierop, Sales & Marketing Manager, recalls.

Van de Mierop notes that, "The integration with Agrimex added a substantial amount of nutritional and application knowledge to Nutrex activities, as well as an extensive product portfolio to start with. However, our experience in export was very limited and required a very different approach." Thus the company needed to further reach its customers worldwide by participating in fairs and set up a dedicated communication line with clients. This resulted in a very active network of distributors spanning over 30 countries today.

"Thanks to discipline, perseverance and a clear strategy of steady development from the ground up, rather than that of a rapid uncontrolled expansion, today Nutrex thrives and is recognised as a serious and reliable business partner and supplier of high quality additives," Van de Mierop says.

One noticeable path that Nutrex has taken is towards producing specialty products rather than commodity items. Van de Mierop shares that from its foundation to now, Nutrex invested a considerable share of its profit in new product development and product application support. "We've gradually moved our focus more and more towards specialty products and away from commodity products. It requires a lot of patience and discipline, not only from ourselves but also from our distributors. Specialty products are not only more difficult to develop, but especially more difficult to sell, as people are not familiar with the product concept and may be reluctant to take the risk of change."

He concludes that, "We shouldn't forget that not only our business is highly competitive, but also our customer's business is highly competitive. Time and time again, we have to earn their trust by offering products and support that provides them with added value that's worth taking the risk of making a change."

To fully understand the needs of the clients, "Our team of

sales managers and nutritionists are constantly in close contact with our distributors around the world, who in turn are close to their customers and end users. This open communication with distributors and customers gives us a premium position to introduce new products and applications. Thanks to such close cooperation, we have become much appreciated for our general nutritional and application knowledge that goes beyond our own product portfolio," Van de Mierop says.

He adds that the company's close co-operation with universities and research institutes help ensure that Nutrex has the latest insight in new trends, new developments as well as emerging market needs.

In most countries, the company utilises an extensive network of local distributors that exclusively distribute Nutrex's products. "Having a local partner that knows the local market, how to approach it, that has an active customer base and that obviously speaks the language, helps us achieve a very good performance in terms of product registration, market entry and product acceptance," Van de Mierop points out.

He adds that, "Although some business elements are very similar wherever you go around the world, similar doesn't mean that it's exactly the same and often the small things can make a huge difference. Having local partners enable us to achieve our global objectives by adapting our regional strategies to deal with local market conditions. Sometimes it's tempting to choose a large local player with a big customer base and product portfolio as a partner, but from experience, we tend to find a better match in a medium-sized distributor for a long-term cooperation."

Nutrex places high importance to its distribution network, as it is the company's direct link to the clients in every country, allowing for a win-win situation on both ends. "In the end, everyone wants to grow and develop his or her business. If we feel that we can't provide sufficient added value to our partner's business, then it becomes difficult to ensure a good focus on our products, to align our marketing strategies and to provide consistent technical product support," says Van de Mierop.

Currently, Nutrex enjoys a strong presence in several Asian countries including China, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. Van de Mierop shares that "these are countries with very high populations and a considerable



Kurt Van de Mierop,
Nutrex Sales &
Marketing Manager

economical growth. Consequently, meat consumption is likely to substantially increase in the coming years. This offers good opportunities, as the feed industry there appreciates high quality products from reliable suppliers such as Nutrex."

A key opportunity in the market as Nutrex sees it, is the rapid expansion of small- and medium-sized customers that are aiming to become bigger players.

Particularly in Asia, Van de Mierop notes that many farmers still look to Europe when it comes to new developments and standards. An example is growing concern within Asia about the use of antibiotics as growth enhancers [AGPs]. "European suppliers are generally considered to be reliable and to have more experience in providing innovative solutions that meet ever increasing demands for food safety. However, Chinese competitors are gaining interest due to increasing price pressure. Various unfortunate incidents regarding quality issues and a lack of transparency among Chinese suppliers are main obstacles for the moment, but this may change in the future, as China is also set on improving its reputation by implementing more stringent legislation and controls."

He also noticed that customers today are more critical. Unless marketing is backed by scientifically verifiable results, even the best marketing campaigns behind them will not work. Therefore, the company is focusing a lot more on sound R&D and technology.

Amid such stiff competition and various issues in the market,

Nutrex has carved its presence with products such as Nutrase Xyla, a bacterial endo-xylanase particularly suited for corn-soy diets as well as wheat based diets – one of the company's key livestock solutions.

"Its technical nature and unique properties set it clearly apart from competitors. Many people still adhere to the idea that xylanases are only a secondary activity in corn-soy diets and that other NSP or digestive enzymes are absolutely necessary to improve performance. Marketing Nutrase Xyla often means changing people's mindset as they are so fixed on this idea. However, over time, we've built up one of the most extensive technical enzyme files in the feed industry that

clearly proves different and helps us to achieve our goals. Due to its technical nature, Nutrase Xyla also allows us to evaluate the quality and nutritional knowledge of our distributor, as this is a crucial requirement for a long term cooperation," Van de Mierop explains.

Nuvisol Hatch is also another highly successful product from its own R&D. Created to enhance production in poultry breeders, it is designed for flexible application through drinking water.

Under its Free-Tox brand, Nutrex offers a range of affordable, yet highly effective, multi-component mycotoxin binders that have proven to be very versatile with regard to minimising the adverse effects and business cost of mycotoxin contamination.

The company has developed and produced this broad range of mycotoxin binders, recognising the need to minimise the economic losses associated with mycotoxins.




Van de Mierop explains that, "Mycotoxins and their effects on performance are indeed a significant threat to the animal production industry. Recent studies have shown that problems related to mycotoxins are much more predominant and economically important than previously thought. It is now widely accepted that adverse effects on the immune system, besides specific diseases and symptoms, cause a considerable part of the economic losses related to mycotoxins."

Aside from mitigating the impact of mycotoxins, Van de Mierop shares that, "one of the most important challenges for the coming years will be the development of alternatives to antimicrobial growth enhancers [AGPs]. Growing concern over an increased resistance to antibiotics pushes more and more countries to completely abolish them, or to strictly control their use. From their experience in the European market, Nutrex has developed an extensive know-how and product portfolio that offers various good alternatives."

With its commitment to long-term growth, Nutrex aims to further develop its business, particularly in the US, by establishing a permanent local presence in that market. It is also investing considerably in European production facilities to meet increased market demand for enzyme and mycotoxin binder products.

With worldwide access to quality raw materials and technologies, its strategic R&D investments and constant focus to give added value, Nutrex has indeed come a long way since 1995. It has been and will continue to be a valuable partner of the animal nutrition sector. ☺



Nutrase Xyla

ENDO-1,4-β-XYLANASE

DESCRIPTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unique bacterial endo-1,4-β-xylanase ● Break-down of both soluble and insoluble arabinoxylans increases nutrient availability ● Optimal activity at neutral pH ensures maximum duration of enzymatic activity ● Low sensitivity to xylanase inhibitors ● Highly stable during pelleting and digestion
EFFECTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improves growth and FCR ● Promotes higher breast meat yield ● Ensures dry litter
BENEFITS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One enzyme preparation for all species ● Proven economical return ● Effective in all rations containing arabinoxylans, including wheat, corn, barley, sorghum, rye and cereal by-products

PUT THE BEST IN,
GET THE MOST OUT

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Nutrex is a research-driven company, specialized in development, production and marketing of additives for feed and food. It is our aim to engage in a sustainable partnership as your most reliable supplier of optimal solutions for better nutrition.



the finishing touch for nutrition