

PRESS RELEASE

Co-operation with AnalytiCon Discovery GmbH

Potsdam, October 24, 2002 - Roche Vitamins has signed a co-operation agreement with the AnalytiCon Discovery GmbH (Potsdam), one of the world's leading biotech companies researching active substances based on natural compounds. This co-operation is consistent with Roche's search for healthier nutrition, and is in line with the company's central motto „prevention before therapy“.

Fruits, vegetables and other foods are known to contain numerous compounds (e.g. free radical inhibitors) with a preventive potential regarding a number of human diseases. Since there is a growing market for these nutraceuticals, which are natural ingredients, they are attracting increased interest from food and pharmaceutical industries.

Roche Vitamins has decided to systematically screen edible plants and other foodstuffs for human consumption, such as spices and mushrooms, for their potential as sources of nutraceuticals. Roche Vitamins has engaged AnalytiCon Discovery to develop a programme for the selection, acquisition and fractionation of materials, and to offer support in the purification and structure elucidation of the compounds found.

Dr Manfred Eggersdorfer, head of Research and Development of Roche Vitamins, welcomes the agreement with AnalytiCon Discovery. „For Roche Vitamins it is an important step to have signed a co-operation agreement with such an innovative company. I am convinced that the high competence of AnalytiCon Discovery in the field of natural compounds makes them an ideal partner for us in our efforts in the nutraceutical business.“

Mr Pierre-Etienne Weber, head of Global Marketing, believes that this initiative fits well with the Roche Vitamins strategy of providing innovative products and customers' solutions. Thus further supporting the brand claim „Ahead of your needs“.

AnalytiCon Discovery GmbH:

The internationally operating AnalytiCon Discovery GmbH is a worldwide market-leader in the field of structurally fully elucidated natural compound libraries. On the basis of its ready-to-screen technology in the sector of natural compounds (MEGAbolite) and natural compound analogues (NatDiverse) the company enjoys an exceptional market positioning. This new technology replaces the costly, time-consuming and laborious practices of bioassay-guided extract fractioning and dereplication.

This innovative concept has already resulted in the award of several substantial contracts to AnalytiCon from pharmaceutical corporations in Europe (Boehringer Ingelheim, Bayer), the US (amongst others Schering-Plough) and Japan. Currently, AnalytiCon has direct access to roughly a quarter of all known natural compounds worldwide (25,000 of 110,000), i.e. in their pure and structurally fully elucidated form. The Company is leading in the custom-design and development of combinational libraries based on rare natural compound structures (NatDiverse tailor-made). In structure elucidation of natural compounds it can offer the highest throughput available on the market (up to 50 structures per day). AnalytiCon currently employs 60 members of staff at the Biotech Campus Potsdam-Hermannswerder. Thanks to its exceptional position the company is able to offer its clients a complete Supply-Chain-Management from the initial biomaterial to the final lead compound.

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Roche Vitamins:

The Roche Vitamins and Fine Chemicals Division is the world's leading bulk supplier of vitamins and carotenoids to the feed, food, pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries. It has its own research centres, production facilities and worldwide sales and distribution network. In 2001, it employed 7500 people and recorded sales of more than 3.5 billion Swiss francs.

Based on its leading position in most of the business fields where it is active, a successful range of new products, promising projects in the pipeline, qualified and dedicated people and excellent customer relationships, the Division is very well equipped for long-term success. Building on its long tradition, the Division is uniquely positioned to provide outstanding products and services for human and animal wellbeing.

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