Rinse-off products such as shower gels, liquid soaps, toothpastes, shampoos and conditioners as a vital part of people’s daily hygiene routines not only help to improve or maintain their health and appearance, but are also designed to enhance consumers’ overall well-being. The increasing significance of natural products, as well as consumers’ growing environmental awareness, has opened up numerous new opportunities for manufacturers of rinse-off products. But exploiting these opportunities creates challenges for manufacturers across areas ranging from formulation to certification. To support manufacturers who are targeting the flourishing market for natural rinse-off products, BASF’s Personal Care business offers a wide range of natural-based and high-performance ingredients.

From niche to mass market

Natural personal care products used to be a special treat that consumers indulged in every once in a while. However, market data now show that natural personal care products have become a valued part of many consumers’ lives. In fact, global sales saw double-digit growth between 2005 and 2010, increasing to 23 billion US dollars (see fig. 1). There has been growth in sales of natural personal care products across all the world’s regions, with particularly high growth rates in Brazil and the Asia-Pacific area (see fig. 2) as well as very consistent growth in the European market. In recent years total sales in Europe have risen steadily, with a compound annual growth rate of 11.1% between 2006 and 2011 (see fig. 3). And with 57% of consumers feeling that beauty products based on natural ingredients are better for them, the market growth looks set to continue.

Formulating certified rinse-off products

Rinse-off applications containing plant-derived ingredients enjoy growing popularity. Consumers are looking for rinse-off products that provide mild and gentle cleansing, prevent irritation and dryness, maintain the natural balance of skin and hair, and keep them healthy and beautiful. In other words, as well as supporting their physical health, consumers expect these rinse-off solutions to deliver in terms of performance and efficacy, and to contribute to their overall sense of well-being – for example, by enabling invigorating shower or home spa experiences. Formulating natural-based solutions that satisfy these diverse needs can prove difficult. Choosing suitable, competitively viable ingredients that deliver the desired level of mildness and foam quantity, and that also conform to natural cosmetic standards, represents one of the major challenges in securing market share. Besides ingredient choice and formulation expertise, the success of natural-based rinse-off products depends very much on performance and product positioning. In addition, carefully considered product certification and labeling lend credibility to a product.
and can be an effective tool in this respect.

When developing new solutions BASF makes the needs of consumers the starting point and aims to develop products and solutions that are of real value for consumers and yield a return to its customers. Its portfolio includes a broad range of naturally-derived, chemically processed ingredients and formulation concepts. In addition, the company offers services from formulation to claim and certification support, and also helps when adapting products and formulations to local consumers’ specific needs.

Combining naturalness with mildness

Plantacare surfactants, the alkyl polyglucoside range from BASF, provide rinse-off products with the gentleness consumers are looking for. They can even improve the appeal of oral care products. In documented tests, they have exhibited good dermal, ocular as well as mucous membrane compatibility, and provide rich and dense foaming properties. The sugar surfactants are made from renewable plant-derived feedstocks such as vegetable oil and starch, and offer a good toxicological and ecological profile. They are ultimately biodegradable under aerobic and anaerobic conditions. They can be recommended for natural cosmetics concepts such as NaTrue, Ecocert, BDIH, Cosmos, NPA, NSF-QAI, and FDA GRAS and can also be considered for use in products formulated according to EU Ecolabel, Nordic Swan and Bra Miljöval standards.

Finely dispersed oil for natural skin protection

Another ingredient that enables nature-based, high-performance rinse-off solutions is Lamesoft OD with the INCI name Coco-Caprylate (and) Lauryl Glucoside (and) Glycerin (and) Polyglyceryl-2 Dipolyhydroxystearate (and) Polyglyceryl-3 Diisostearate. The new micro-emulsion is derived exclusively from renewable raw materials. It provides shower products, bath preparations, facial cleansers and liquid soaps, as well as baby wash products, with very finely dispersed oil components which remain on the skin after washing. Thanks to this oil deposition the product respects the skin barrier, leaves the skin feeling soft and smooth, and is also suited for use in sensitive skin-care products. Thanks to the micro-emulsion, transparent or opaque formulations can be easily prepared, and even essential oils can be solubilized. It is also suitable for natural cosmetic standards.

Environmentally friendly hair conditioning

At the moment, developing natural solutions for the conditioner sector that are both effective and environmentally friendly is one of the major formulation challenges in the hair care market. The new, naturally derived conditioner compound Plantaquat NC with the INCI name Cetearyl Alcohol (and) Lecithin (and) Sodium Cetearyl Sulfate (and) Vegetable Oil [PCPC] closes this gap. This high-performance compound was specially developed for manufacturing hair conditioning products, particularly those intended to be certified to natural cosmetic standards. The balanced conditioner compound is a combination of an emulsifier, a consistency agent and a conditioning agent, and consists solely of renewable and biodegradable raw materials. Comprehensive performance evaluation, including salon hair tests, was carried out, showing that the compound offers good hair-conditioning properties, creates volume and protects against hair breakage. In addition to testing the physical properties of this conditioner compound, also half-head tests were carried out on Caucasian and Asian hair, which showed that the ingredient exhibits outstanding sensorial effects on wet hair. To fulfill the standards set by various natural and organic cosmetic certification bodies, for example, Ecocert, Cosmos and NaTrue, a non-GMO lecithin was selected for use in Plantaquat NC.

Additional information and a selection of formulations can be found on the Internet – see Internet panel

References:

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