RECONNAISSANCE
AUTHENTICATION NEWS®

VOLUME 27 – NO 2 / FEBRUARY 2021

Ginseng to Carry Trackable Labels

Falsified ginseng products have been a feature of the natural products market for years, and one Canadian producer has now taken steps to protect its brand from the fraudsters, reports securingindustry.com.

Canadian Vita, Canada's leading ginseng supplier, has contracted Nanotech Security to supply colour-shifting labels with printed logos and trackable serial numbers for its ginseng products, to help customers ensure they are buying the genuine product and not a counterfeit.

The company has positioned its products – which include ginseng roots, ginseng extract capsules and other products like ginseng infused honey – as a premium quality brand, offering high levels of compounds that have been linked to health benefits and low levels of pesticide residues and moisture.

In particular, the company says testing has shown that the level of active ingredient in American ginseng grown in Ontario, Canada, is close to 10%, compared to samples from the US (at 6-7%) and China (5-8%).

Prices of ginseng products vary widely based on the species, quality, and purity of the source material, and this variance has become a major driver for intentional adulteration. Lower quality ginseng can be mislabelled to pass it off as a premium product, or mixed with another type, for example, in order to maximise profit. It can be hard to tell the difference between different products without laboratory testing, and even more so when the ginseng is processed into other forms like capsules.

A literature-based study published in January in 'Frontiers in Pharmacology' estimated that out of 507 ginseng-containing commercial herbal products sold across 12 countries, 76% were authentic while 24% were reported as adulterated.

Nanotech Security is providing Canadian Vita with custom labels consisting of LumaChrome colour-shifting optical thin film, which has previously been deployed in government documents and banknotes and is increasingly being used to protect commercial products.

Expansion of feature portfolio

In a separate development, Nanotech Security has announced the acquisition of a patent portfolio from Adigy Canada.

The portfolio comprises six patents, three in Canada and three in the US, relating to innovative methods for creating customised optical devices.

They include a nano-media information carrier based on pixelated nano-structures combined with an intensity control layer and two methods for fabricating colour image display devices comprising colour pixels, one from a generic stamp and the other from pixels that are selectively activated and/or deactivated by material deposition.

According to Nanotech, the IP enables the efficient production of an optical device by prefabricating a foil substrate with nanostructures and using printers or lasers to selectively cover those structures not required to product optical devices.

Adigy Canada is controlled by Dr Bozena Kaminska, a director and shareholder of Nanotech, who was paid $100,000 cash for the patents and who will receive commission plus ongoing royalties for a 'specific customer' developed in the next two years.

'This acquisition adds to our already strong patent portfolio bringing it to 46 patents,' said Nanotech President and CEO Troy Bullock. 'These patents allow us to further protect our KolourOptik® technology platform and can introduce new and exciting ways to produce security features in the future'.