

## “Focus on Curcumin in health & functional beverages”

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Curcuminoids from *Curcuma longa* or turmeric roots are among clinically evaluated ingredients with a patented brand name Curcumin C3 Complex. Due to its broad positive impact on human health, C3 Complex is the first of its kind in a category of nutrients and referred to as a bioprotectant. Over 80 studies in conditions ranging from arthritis, inflammation to various forms of cancer and Alzheimer’s disease have used Sabinsa’s Curcumin C3 Complex alone or in combination with BioPerine to enhance bioavailability.

But the main drawback of this ingredient is water insolubility. Due to this property, the application is limited. So scientists from Sami Labs and Sabinsa Corporation, which is its international marketing arm, have developed a product by an innovative technique with superior water solubility. **Shaheen Majeed**, marketing director, Sabinsa Corporation, in an email interaction with **Nandita Vijay** delves deeper into what the development is all about. Excerpts:

### **Tell us about this novel Curcumin with superior water solubility.**

Our uC3 Clear is a novel delivery system of Curcumin. It delivers more Curcumin than any other formulation existent in market without any precipitation or residue. The product is completely water-soluble and provides a clear solution without an over-burdening taste or flavour of Curcuminoids.

### **At what stage of development is this offering?**

It is ready for the market and is launching commercially worldwide soon; samples and bulk material is made available from April 2015. It also has an NPN (Natural Product Number) in Canada and can be marketed here as well.

### **How long did the research take?**

Research on providing the market a water-soluble version has been taking place since sometime, however our focus is turning towards providing Curcumin in sports beverages and health, functional beverages. We realised that existing products do not fulfil the market and customer requirements. Through use of nanotechnology, the research is at a nascent stage and without any long-term safety data, the use of nano-

curcumin is very questionable and as of now, proven unsafe. But in our case the non-nano uC3 Clear resolves such safety questions and has won an award. Therefore we have proven data that our Curcumin composition in the market is a high quality and safe product.

### **When did the company comprehend features of the product as being viable for beverages and soft drinks?**

Tapping into the beverage market has been on our radar for other ingredients and we are working on Curcumin for the same. In fact for Curcumin, it was deemed near impossible and in countries like Japan, companies were adding non-soluble forms of Curcumin directly to their beverages, so we initially felt any innovation in that area might actually go unnoticed. However, the recent influx of sports beverages and the consumers' demand for more palatable food choices sparked our interest once again and we decided to devote R&D for creating the uC3 Clear ingredient. First and foremost, the water solubility of our product is excellent. Sabinsa is a global company and we thrive in taking the challenges to our labs.

The need for beverage grade Curcumin is something we learned from the Japanese market where we see lot of Curcumin-based products in the beverage. However the content of the Curcumin in the products was very low and with unpleasant precipitation the products were required to be packaged in opaque or dark coloured packs. It was this first hurdle that we wanted to overcome without affecting the safety or affordability of the product. Therefore uC3 Clear is the answer to the above issues. It is evident that our uC3 does not require any special packaging. There is no precipitation and it leaves no residues. In fact the product is stable and free from genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and uses nanotechnology.

### **What are the studies undertaken to prove that it could be beneficial for beverages and soft drinks?**

Yes, long-term stability studies on the beverage form as well as the plain powder form have been done and are available for formulators.

### **What are the efforts made by Sami Labs and Sabinsa Corporation to convince beverages' companies and soft drink majors?**

We would like to present the beverage companies a unique opportunity to take the benefits of Sabinsa's Curcumin C3 Complex in the beverage grade form and formulate this unique dietary ingredient into beverages making them healthier and appealing to the consumers. Sabinsa's flagship ingredient, Curcumin C3 Complex is currently the most clinically researched brand in the marketplace. The product has undergone over 40 human clinical trials and has 71 research publications to its credit. Now if these proven benefits can be translated for use as a beverage, they can create a number of additional stock keeping units (SKUs) for marketing companies to expand their reach to their consumers.