

## Pioneering work in veterinary service

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### APSN to produce PCR test kits for animal diseases



APSN is among the few private companies in Malaysia that produces polymer chain reaction (PCR) test kits for various animal diseases (poultry, livestock and aquatic animals).

The core business of APSN consists of R&D in biotechnology, manufacturing of diagnostics kits and animal health pharmaceutical products that include nutraceuticals, anti-microbials, probiotics and feeding supplements. The company aims to make vital difference in the life sciences industry through differentiation in terms of quality, price competitiveness and innovation.

The company is doing pioneering work focusing on biotechnology in food safety, public health and veterinary industries. In food safety, the diagnostic test kits - Halal test (patent pending), universal conditions PCR test (patent pending), DIVA assay test (patent pending), and tests for water quality, prohibited food contaminants and chemical residues are much sought after.

The company strives to create a strong brand that goes beyond Malaysia. "Our next target is to reach the international market. In addition, we provide contract services to companies for development of testing methods and to conduct development and research activities," says Dr Lim Ban Keong, general manager, Rhone Ma Malaysia, the parent company of APSN.

In order to achieve a planned growth, the company has divided the activities into two phases. In the initial phase of development (2007-2009), with the assistance of Malaysian Biotechnology Corporation (BiotechCorp), the team at APSN received five patents, 37 trademarks and one industrial design primarily in the animal health industry market. Phase II of the development (2010-2013) focuses on food safety, public health and collaboration with multinational companies and institutions.

Set up in 2007, APSN has been awarded the Bionexus status by BiotechCorp that indicates the testament to the company's leading and pioneering work in the field of biotechnology and veterinary products. APSN has formed alliances with two other companies and is part of the 'total solution provider (TSP)' business network. This TSP network is a platform for complementary business partnerships that includes Rhone Ma Malaysia, which provides professional veterinary and trading services, and Vet Food Agro Diagnostics, the sole ISO17025-accredited private veterinary service laboratory.

APSN is also working on biosecurity, the art of preventing the entry of hazardous contaminants into a farm, and production or manufacturing facility, which is the primal step in Good Production Practices. Hazardous contaminants can be of infectious, such as bacteria, viruses, fungus and parasites, or non-infectious, such as chemicals. A planned routine screening at points of entry enables producers to use a risk-based approach to prevent perceived or actual risks of contamination and enables decision-making.

The Food Act lists the types and levels of adulterants and contaminants that are not permissible. These adulterants and contaminants are listed because of their potential to cause short or long term food-borne illnesses and poisoning. APSN provides screening and monitoring of the production process - from raw materials to finished products - that reduces the risk of contamination by microbes, toxins and hazardous chemicals.

In a very short time, APSN has won several accolades. In 2007, APSN was accredited with Innovation in Research Award for best government-private collaboration from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation for the development of a PCR test Kit. In 2009, the company was among the top 20 patent filers in Malaysia, and in 2010, it was awarded 1-Innocert certification by SME Corp. In 2011, the company won the Gold Medal in BioInnovation Awards during BioMalaysia 2011 and one of its research scientists, Ms Seetha Jaganathan, won the Woman BioInnovator of the Year Award.