

## **Natraceutical signs a strategic alliance with BioNike for the penetration of Forté Pharma in Italy and the entry into the cosmeceutic market**

- Italy is the third largest market of nutritional supplements in Europe, after Germany and the United Kingdom.
- BioNike is one of the leading companies selling hypoallergenic cosmetics in pharmacies in Italy.
- In addition to the distribution of Forté Pharma's products in Italy, the agreement includes the distribution of BioNike's products in France through Forté Pharma's own pharmaceutical network.

**Barcelona, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2009.-** Natraceutical Group has signed a strategic alliance with BioNike, a pharmaceutical laboratory selling hypoallergenic cosmetics in pharmacies in Italy, for the penetration of Forté Pharma products into the Italian market.

This agreement further establishes Forté Pharma's development in the Italian market, the largest market for nutritional supplements in Europe after Germany and the UK, with a total turnover of 950 million Euros in 2008.

Founded in 1930, BioNike has its own sales network in Italy consisting of 44 representatives, who cover 4,500 pharmacies and para-pharmacies (7,000 expected by 2011).

The Italian company specialises in the development and marketing of hypoallergenic dermocosmetic products for children and adults, and has also their own network of medical representatives consisting of 40 staff, focusing on dermatologists and paediatricians.

BioNike has a range of 150 products, all of them formulated for the prevention of allergies, whose effectiveness the company ensures through clinical and in-vitro studies. In addition, BioNike has two product lines free from gluten, nickel, preservatives and fragrances, the main cause of skin intolerance.

The agreement signed between Forté Pharma and BioNike also includes the distribution of one of the Italian company's product ranges through Forté Pharma's pharmaceutical network in France. Forté Pharma is currently present in over 10 countries in Europe, although the company will focus the marketing of BioNike's products on the French market, where Forté Pharma is one of the market leaders. The pharmaceutical dermocosmetic market in France is twice the size of the Italian market, with a volume of 3,400 million Euros, according to 2007 data.

The two-way partnership with BioNike is consistent with Natraceutical's strategy following the acquisition of Forté Pharma at the end of 2006: to consolidate a leadership position in Europe in order to achieve a solid introduction into the three main markets (Germany, United Kingdom and Italy) and to develop, for this purpose, their own sales network, which will allow in the future the marketing of complementary health products to nutritional supplements.

Forté Pharma achieved a turnover of 57.84 million Euros in 2008, of which 1.3% was linked to the emerging company's activity in the Italian market. On their side, the Italian company closed 2008 with sales of 32 million Euros, of which 95 % came from their domestic market.

With this alliance, Forté Pharma expects their sales in Italy to represent around 10% by 2011.

Xavier Adserà, Natraceutical Group's chairman states that: "After this alliance and the merger of our Ingredients Division with Naturex, Natraceutical shows their ability to adapt their growth strategy to the current market circumstances, thus replacing the strong acquisitions policy of the past by strategic alliances which enable us to keep on growing without the need for external financing".

#### **Natraceutical Group**

Spanish multinational corporation Natraceutical Group is at the forefront of biotechnology applied to nutrition, a leading reference in the research and development of naturally-sourced functional / active ingredients and nutritional complements for the foodstuffs, pharmaceutical and cosmetics sectors. The company streamlines its industrial activity through Laboratoires Forté Pharma, specialising in food supplements in the areas of health, weight control and beauty, which the company markets exclusively in pharmacies.

On October 1<sup>st</sup> 2009, Natraceutical Group announced the merger of their Ingredients Division with the quoted French company Naturex, where Natraceutical will hold a 39% stake.

The merger with Naturex will give birth to the leading independent company in natural ingredients in the world, running production facilities in the USA, France, Spain, Italy, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Morocco, Australia and Brazil, together with their own sales offices in Europe, the US and Asia-Pacific, and a worldwide sales network.

Natraceutical quotes in the Spanish stock exchange under the ticker NATE.MC. Total outstanding shares: 328,713,946.

**[www.natraceuticalgroup.com](http://www.natraceuticalgroup.com)**

#### **For further information**

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