

Bio Huma Netics Provides Innovative Crop Nutrition Products to China

Bio Huma Netics, Inc. (BHN), a U.S. company based in Gilbert, Arizona, has been developing and producing specialty liquid plant nutrition (Huma Gro®) and wastewater remediation (Probiotic Solutions®) products since 1973. BHN sells products in over 20 countries around the world through its product distribution network, including in China since 1999. Justin Smith, BHN VP of international sales, recently took an interview with AgroPages and shared with us BHN's views on the Chinese special fertilizer market.

Q1: Could you introduce your competitive technology and products to us?

The basis of all our products is a proprietary ingredient called Micro Carbon Technology® (MCT). MCT starts with a soft humic material that was never compressed or heated to become anthracite coal and was never covered with an ocean or salt water—and therefore does not contain any heavy metals. We convert this source material into extremely small carbon- and oxygen-rich molecules, then complex it with nutrients to produce an ultra-efficient liquid vehicle—due to the carbon molecule's low molecular weight, greater specific surface area, and higher cation exchange capacity—to move nutrients and agrochemicals into the plant either through the soil or the leaves. This complexing of nutrients with MCT has formed the foundation of over 70 highly efficient HUMA GRO® liquid soil and plant nutrition and crop protection products that:

- When applied directly to the soil or through irrigation, promote the growth of roots and beneficial microorganisms in the soil, creating an active, healthy, and ideal environment for long-term sustainable soil fertility.
- Are safe for foliar-spray application to leaves when applied according to label instructions.
- Reduce the amount of nutrients and crop protection products needed.
- Have a positive environmental impact.

Studies have shown that our plant nutrition products are typically at least four times more efficient, and sometimes much more, than traditional granular fertilizers. Our unique chemistries help get just the right amount of nutrition to the plants at just the right time, in a way that produces no negative effects on the plant crops or the surrounding environment.

Q2: Could you briefly introduce your marketing strategies and activities in China?

Our introduction to the China marketplace in 1999 was initially through our Probiotic Solutions® line of wastewater remediation products. Our distributor in China, Sam Yuan Lei, organized Probiotics Shanghai and was very successful in introducing our products to the China wastewater remediation industry. As his distribution company grew, he began to see the great opportunity China agriculture offers for our Huma Gro® products, and he began to offer those products to the market under the “You Ma” name. At this time, more than 20 of our liquid plant nutrition products are available through the Probiotics Shanghai / You Ma distribution system.

At present, Probiotics Shanghai has area managers that cover multiple China provinces. Sam Yuan Lei's goal is to develop the company's distribution system to where he can have an area manager for each

province, supported by sales representatives for each major city that can provide product assistance, information, and training to individual farmers. Because our products are so much different than traditional granular fertilizers, we know that individual training and assistance will be necessary to launch the products in areas where they have not been used before.

Q3: What do you think are the barriers and opportunities for the Chinese market?

Farmers in China are not much different than farmers throughout the rest of the world. They tend to be very traditional and prefer to use the products that they have always used. However, they are also always on the lookout for anything that will help them grow a higher quality crop with increased yields. This is a great advantage for our products, as their effects can often be seen within just a few days of application. Our experience has been that if just one farmer in an area uses our products, his neighbors will be impressed with what they see and will want the same results.

Farming is much more personal in China than it is in other countries. For instance, while there are over 2 million farms in the United States, with each farm averaging 170 hectares in size, there are over 200 million farms in China, with each farm averaging just 0.65 hectares. This means that, while in the U.S. our distributors and representatives will sell large quantities of product to a relatively small number of customers, in China we will sell much smaller quantities of product to much larger numbers of customers. And those customers will likely be applying the product by hand and seeing how well it works close-up—as will their neighbors, and their neighbors’ neighbors. First-hand experience and word of mouth continues to be the most effective way to increase the use of our products, and the smaller farms in China afford us an opportunity for this to happen. As China farmers use our products and see how effective they are, they will expand their use of our crop programs in which multiple products are used to enhance every stage of the complete crop growth cycle.

China is interested in bringing new ideas and technologies to its farmers that will make farming easier and more productive. For fertilizers, this means moving away from indiscriminately applying large amounts of granular fertilizer to crops to implementing a more planned approach that better understands exactly which specific nutrients are needed at specific points in the growth cycle. It is also important to be able to apply no more product than is required, and to do so in a way that does no harm to the farm’s ecosystem.

All of these factors make BHN products a natural fit for China agriculture, and we look forward to helping China agriculture reach its goal of growing abundant food crops to feed its own people and to export crops to other countries in the world that need them.

More information about Huma Gro® and Probiotic Solutions® products is available at www.bhn.us or www.bhnchina.com/. For more information about BHN products available in China, contact Probiotics Shanghai at sam@bhnchina.com.

(Publication No. BHN-151106-01)

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