

NutrOcean inaugurates a marine microalgae production plant in Rimouski

Press release

Rimouski, September 27th, 2010 // NutrOcean has inaugurated its new marine microalgae production plant on the 27th of September 2010, in the region of Pointe-au-Père in the town of Rimouski (Quebec).

Marine microalgae are at the start of the food chain in marine ecosystems and are recognized as a high-quality food source for shellfish larvae and for the production of zooplankton in marine finfish farming, particularly when [fresh](#). They are also increasing in demand as an ingredient source for products such as nutraceuticals, cosmeceuticals, pharmaceuticals, horticultural fertilizers and for the production of biofuel.

Dr. Sabin Boily, President and Chief Executive Officer of Valeo Management L.P has declared that: «fish accumulate omega-3 lipids by feeding on smaller organisms in the food chain including microalgae that are the only marine organisms that actually synthesize omega-3-rich lipids. The inauguration of the production plant allows the company to position itself strategically in a fast growing market».

According to the mayor of Rimouski, Mr. **Éric Forest**, «Rimouski, which is a major maritime hub, is pleased to see a factory specializing in marine culture being established on its territory, thus generating jobs in an area of training, particularly important in our educational institutions. We already had several marine-related industries and we are very excited that a company specialized in the production of essential ingredients in the aquaculture and food processing world coming to Rimouski and serving the world market.

Fish do not produce EPA or DHA (the Omega-3 fatty acids). They accumulate it through their prey who themselves feed on the lower trophic levels. Thus, EPA and DHA are distributed throughout the food chain: firstly they are synthesized by micro-algae, and then eaten by zooplankton, followed by fish. We know that fish accumulate contaminants as well, unlike micro-algae that lie at the bottom of the food chain. Since the micro-algae from NutrOcean are produced in a closed environment at high concentrations, they are free of contaminants and harvested at commercial quantities. In addition, production of micro-algae causes no harm to the environment; instead, they consume CO₂ to reproduce.

Dr. **Bruce Holub**, emeritus professor at University of Guelph, in Ontario, has said : «The micro-algae market is a rapidly growing source for the provision of the important marine-based omega-3 essential fatty acids for enhancing human health. I am very pleased to participate to the opening of this new production facility in Canada with its global market coverage.»

Dr. **Michael Crawford**, from the Imperial College for Science, Technology and Medicine and from 1989 to 1997, director of the Institute of Brain Chemistry and Human Nutrition, at Metropolitan University in London was the first one to identify the benefits of omega-3. «In 1972 I made the discovery and published evidence that the brain required omega 3 docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) for growth, function and its evolution. The brain evolved in the sea 500 million years ago using DHA for its signalling structures and despite evolution going from dinoflagellates to dinosaurs and humans it is still the major functional and only omega 3 component responsible for vision, all sensory and motor functions and cognition. Its availability from land systems is poor. Hence we still rely on the marine food web. Tragically, the wild catching of fish reached a plateau over a decade ago. Unless we solve the need to feed the growing population with brain food, the outlook for our children and their children is a further escalation and globalization of mental ill health and brain disorders. Hence there is real need to develop new resources and I welcome the initiative to develop algal sources here by NutrOcean to help meet this challenge for the future health and intelligence of mankind. The evidence now is robust and overwhelming and suddenly the industry has come round and is making billions of \$ out of the story.»

Mr. **Serge Bujold**, President and general manager of NutrOcean, said that: «NutrOcean owns innovative technologies and production facilities that allow an ecological production of quality microalgae with great potential in both markets of aquaculture and ingredient. The establishment of its new plant in Rimouski illustrates its desire to bring to market an innovation originally made at UQAR-ISMER.»

«The creation of NutrOcean is a fine example of practical impact of university research in regional economic development», said **Michel Ringuet**, rector of UQAR. NutrOcean was created by Valeo Management, a limited partner of UQAR and its technology is based on work carried out by researchers at UQAR-ISMER. « UQAR is proud to have thus created a technology that has led to the development of new processes that are now being transferred to the society», he added.

The director of ISMER, Mr. **Serge Demers**, said : «The creation of NutrOcean is, for ISMER, the concrete harvest of practical research that emanates from its researchers. This is the beautiful culmination of efforts to fill a critical role of academic researchers, namely the transfer of knowledge into goods and services to society. I can only rejoice at this success and hope that NutrOcean serves as an example for other innovative projects.»

The establishment of the production facilities has been made possible with the financial participation of:

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