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The Mystery of Soft Gel Manufacturing

October 16, 2006 Wayne Lewis

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For more than 70 years the process of soft gel manufacturing has remained a mystery; a tightly guarded secret, known only to the privileged few. Soft gel manufacturing has traditionally been the domain of large pharmaceutical, nutraceutical and cosmetic manufacturers due to significant costs, space requirements and necessary environmental controls. As a consequence, limited advancements have been made in the manufacturing process itself through the years.

However, recent work by CapPlus Technologies has capitalized on the company's years of experience in soft gel manufacturing, including taking a closer look at equipment, manufacturing, installation, formulation and operation. Over the years, as soft gel systems have become more complex and associated costs have increased, CapPlus recognized the need for a smaller system with research and development (R&D) and production capability.



R&D Softgel

Consequently, CapPlus developed a new turn-key Softgel Pilot Plant, which requires only 250 square feet to operate and can function as an R&D machine or produce up to 12,000 capsules per hour (with additional tumble dryers). The Softgel Pilot Plant is ideal for R&D applications making batches from 5 kg to 50 kg and can easily be upgraded to production status. It also enables operators to produce individual test batches or operate continuously in a production mode (with additional tumble dryers). Interested parties are able to visit CapPlus and use a fully operational version with their own ingredients. In addition, CapPlus offers assistance with development of gel formulations to maximize production.

In addition to the new Softgel Pilot Plant, CapPlus is consistently looking to offer innovations in equipment. To address the needs of experienced, high volume, low maintenance, continuous production applications, CapPlus developed the new R3. This is one of the fastest and most efficient systems in the world with more than 30 significant improvements over conventional systems, including high speed production of up to 350,000 soft gels per hour. Utilizing high velocity tumble dryers and precise chilling systems, the R3 uses 70-percent less lubrication and less energy. The R3 comes complete with exclusive, patented, high speed, low friction medicine pumps and all cGMP (good manufacturing practice) contact parts. These enhancements, plus an ultra light weight wedge and effortless spreader box adjustments are just the beginning.

From start up to filling global demand, CapPlus Technologies aims to train companies on their first machine or can outfit an entire plant from material processing to finished packaging.

Wayne Lewis is the founder and president of CapPlus Technologies, a Phoenix-based company dedicated to innovation and development in the manufacture of soft gels, capsules and tablets. Contact the company at www.capplustech.com

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