

## A conversation with Dr. Paula Lennon, Gattefossé Group Innovation Director



Dr. Paula Lennon

**EURO COSMETICS:** *You offer the cosmetic industry a variety of high performance products and represented in nearly 50 countries. Last year, you opened a new technical centre of excellence in Mumbai, India. What does this mean for you and your customers?*

**Dr. Paula Lennon:** Gattefossé inaugurated in September 2015 a new office and technical centre in Mumbai. This centre brings together a FDA certified laboratory for Pharmaceutical applications and a state of the art Personal Care laboratory with a surface capacity of 325m<sup>2</sup>. The beauty routine in India is unique and texture expectations are different to elsewhere. A laboratory on the Indian continent will allow us to be closer to our customers and better understand their needs, as a consequence allowing us to develop more targeted ingredients.

The Indian personal care industry has evolved substantially and recent changes on claims substantiation means that there is an increased interest for high quality ingredients with extensive proof of performance such as those provided by Gattefossé.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *And what other possibilities are there for research and development?*

**Dr. Paula Lennon:** Geographical expansion is an important part of Gattefossé's growth strategy. We will shortly be inaugurating our newest affiliate, Gattefossé Mediterranean in May 2016. We will also continue to accompany our customers locally with a brand new applications laboratory dedicated to both our Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care markets, to open in North America in early 2017.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *What is the source of your innovation strength and how are you positioned with respect to this?*

**Dr. Paula Lennon:** Gattefossé holds a unique position as a durable privately owned company that has established equally strong partnerships with the cosmetics and pharmaceutical industries. Our profound knowledge of dermatology and the skin, through our pharmaceutical business, has shaped who we are in Personal Care. Our high standards, applied to the quality and safety of our ingredients, also apply to their performance and we are careful to launch only ingredients that will truly make a difference to customers and consumers.

Gattefossé invests heavily and regularly in R&D – one quarter of Gattefossé staff is dedicated to research and formulation – and we are fortunate to have in-house capacities allowing us to evaluate in depth how our ingredients perform in finished products. This means extensive formulation capacity to test our texture and sensory ingredients but also cell culture and biological screening laboratories to evaluate and optimize new cosmetics actives.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *Regulations and time-consuming approval process limit the room for play for new products and innovative processes. How are you handling this?*

**Dr. Paula Lennon:** Today, it is indeed difficult to obtain approval for ingredients that present new chemistry. The China registration process remains opaque and we fully understand that our customers are not always willing to reference ingredients that are not worldwide approved.

Much of Gattefossé's chemistry is based upon the transformation of lipids and we have at our disposition a wealth of natural ingredients that can be reacted, combined or formulated together to create new products with strong benefits. As a physical chemist, I firmly believe that we have not yet achieved everything that we can with natural materials that already exist. We are exploring innovative physical processes that will allow us to transform the performance of lipid excipients and create new ones that bring valuable solutions to our customers.

As regards actives, Gattefossé has invested and built a strong expertise in the NaDES extraction technology. Using this method, we can obtain extracts with very different composition compared to conventional solvents. It allows us to discover new properties in well-known plants that are already highly studied.

This said, I do hope that the registration process in China will be relaxed to give room to innovation through new chemistries.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *How do you incorporate your customers into the development of innovative products?*

**Dr. Paula Lennon:** The needs of our customers and of their customers are the starting point to all our innovation projects. We work hand in hand with customers long before an ingredient becomes visible on the market. By sharing expertise, we can be certain that our ingredients meet the desired criteria and it certainly leads to improved performance. We also have the capacity to develop exclusive and tailor-made ingredients and formulation solutions for key customers.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *For the development of EMULIUM® MELLIFERA, you were awarded gold for the best ingredient at in-cosmetics in Hamburg. How have your customers reacted to this?*

**Dr. Paula Lennon:** Emulium® Mellifera has been an astounding success. Our customers have recognized the sensory and clinical benefits and the ingredient has already been referenced by many prestigious brands. The success is worldwide with particular interest shown by luxury Asian brands. In Korea and China, the climate-adaptation capacity of Emulium® Mellifera is of particular interest and consumer tests have shown that the textures created with the ingredient are adored by consumers.

We recently completed additional studies on this ingredient showing its excellent

suitability for sensitive and hyper-sensitive skins. With increasing pollution and a growing urban population, skin sensitivity is a major concern so we are glad to be able to bring a solution that is both efficient and a pleasure to use.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *What new products will you present at in-cosmetics in Paris this year, and which proven products?*

**Dr. Paula Lennon:** This year, Gattefossé has a major launch of a new active, Gatuline® Renew, which specifically targets skin texture. A degraded skin texture is one of the most ageing signs and one that cannot be easily corrected. The natural ageing process along with sun, pollution and environmental aggression cause damage that is visible through dehydration lines, large pores and an uneven surface. The application of foundations to a degraded skin texture, rather than camouflaging faults, can accentuate them.

This new active, extracted from *Cryptomeria Japonica* buds and rich in Isopimaric acid, acts precisely on this problem. It relaunches the skin's cell renewal mechanism, throughout the epidermis, restoring its capacity to regenerate and defend itself. As a result, the coarseness of the texture is erased. The skin becomes smoother, more hydrated and softer, both to the eye and to touch.

The launch of a new Gatuline® is always an important one for Gattefossé. We have a restricted range of actives and as a result our expectations as regards efficacy are extremely high. Gatuline® Renew has strong significant efficacy versus placebo and we are proud to be presenting it in Paris. We are confident in its success.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *What significance does your company place on sustainability and what strategies are you pursuing here?*

**Dr. Paula Lennon:** It is our responsibility, as an actor in the industry, to participate in building a better world for future generations. Gattefossé has been committed

for more than 135 years to working for tomorrow and not just for today. In the 1920's, one of the founders René-Maurice Gattefossé worked hard with local agriculture cooperatives and associations to help lavender growers improve their yields and as a result their working and living conditions. This fair-trade attitude is deeply embedded in Gattefossé's culture and values today.

We have engaged to integrate sustainability and social responsibility across all aspects of our business. It is at the heart of our new innovations and is central to product development.

We are currently building our own corporate responsibility guidelines and determining our objectives for the years to come.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *What is your company's future strategy?*

**Dr. Paula Lennon:** Gattefossé's growth in personal care will result from a combination of geographical expansion, in particular on the Asian continent, and penetration of ingredients into new application areas.

Our main reputation is in skincare but over a quarter of our new ingredients can be found in color cosmetics launches. Gattefossé's technologies hold a lot of potential for this application but also for suncare and high SPF skincare. We have many new ingredients in the pipeline for both these areas that will enable the creation of original textures with improved skin feel and performance.

As mentioned already, central to our future strategy is of course our commitment to sustainability. We aim to grow in a responsible manner as we believe it is our duty and one of the prerequisites for success in the long run.

Thank you for the conversation.