Socorex Isba: experts in laboratory metrology and animal injection

A world leader in precision liquid handling, Socorex Isba exports more than 90% of the dosing instruments it produces in Ecublens near Lausanne. **BY SYLVAIN CHRISTEN, CEO OF SOCOREX ISBA SA**

Liquid volume measurements in a laboratory require special attention and adequate instrumentation, especially when the range is less than a microlitre.

Technological know-how

Precision dosing has been Socorex's strength for more than 50 years. The company, whose production site is in Ecublens near Lausanne, mastered the tightness of a plunger in a barrel, liquid flow through a valve system and fluid metrology. This expertise proved to be an asset in manufacturing medical syringes until the 1980s and the transition to increasingly precise dosing instruments in ever smaller volumes.

Today Socorex concentrates its activities in the areas of laboratory liquid handling such as dispensers, manual and electronic micropipettes, pipettors and repeater pipettes, for example and animal health including variable and fixed volume automatic injectors for mass vaccination.

Calibration to the highest standards

Accompany our products through their lifespan, Socorex offers a service centre with qualified personnel providing efficient maintenance and calibration. The laboratory has been accredited to ISO 17025 standards and the service programme has increased as demand has grown. More than ten service levels are now offered for instruments of all brands, both in Socorex's laboratories and on customers' sites.

> Beyond its quality, the success of a products depends on the circles of competences which surround it.

Global distribution with local roots

More than 90% of products are exported worldwide through dedicated distributor networks. These partners serve users by providing technical advice, keeping stock, caring for sales and performing maintenance locally.

Over the years Socorex has built an important community of institutional and private partners. These contacts and collaborations consolidate its presence in the Lake Geneva region making the company a privileged player in the promotion of science.

Staying at the forefront of progress

Liquid handling is constantly evolving with new analytical methods, miniturisation of equipment and increasing costs of reagents. These trends fuel the demand for reliable, ergonomic, durable instrumentation enabling precision dosing in very small volume ranges. Meeting these expectations remains Socorex's main focus.

Precision micropipettes and bottle-top dispensers undergo a strigent validation process before QC acceptance.

InnoMedica's clean room facility in the MIC.

InnoMedica develops new cancer medication at the Marly Innovation Center

What started as a venture in an improvised laboratory in a basement in Bern will soon find its way into Swiss hospitals: an innovative biological transport system to improve chemotherapy

BY ANDREA ZURKIRCHEN, HEAD OF COMMUNICATION, HR, LEGAL & COMPLIANCE AT INNOMEDICA

The concept is simple but smart. The aim is not to discover new active substances, but to enhance the risk-benefit profile of well-known pharmaceutical ingredients. "This was the sole reason why we dared to start this project in 2013," explains Dr Peter Halbherr, General Manager of InnoMedica. "Otherwise it would have been impossible for us to finance it." Because of this, InnoMedica's therapy does not qualify as a new substance but as a known substance with innovation, allowing for a simpler submission to Swissmedic, thus constituting a massive strategic advantage.

In-house clean room facility

"At the beginning of the project it was rather difficult to find investors willing to finance our idea and we soon realised that it wouldn't be possible to outsource the production process," Dr Halbherr says. "So we invested nearly all our acquired new capital in the first clean room facility. Of course, this was only feasible with a partner who understood the needs of a small pharma startup and was also willing to take risks."

Dr Halbherr remembers how the team built up their production site in the Marly Innovation Centre near Fribourg. In hindsight, the construction of InnoMedica's own cleanroom turned out to be a wise decision that has proven instrumental for fast development of the drug compound. The former Ilford complex was an ideal incubator, offering a good infrastructure for pharmaceutical production purposes as well as considerable room for expansion.

Today the InnoMedica team consists of 22 employees and is continuously growing. The first clinical batch will soon be manufactured for InnoMedica's initial clinical trial with the cancer therapy Talidox. The trial will take place in five Swiss hospitals and be conducted by the Swiss Group for Clinical Cancer Research (SAKK). Additionally, the research and development department has already filled the pipeline with promising new oncological compounds, while also venturing into neurology: "As it turns out, our transport system can be modified so as to cross the blood brain barrier and we decided to use this advantage for a new approach in the treatment of Parkinson's Disease." explains Dr Halbherr.

The Marly Innovation Center in Marly (canton of Fribourg).

Across the blood brain barrier

The treatment uses an endogenous active substance with protective and regenerative properties aiming to reverse the neuro-degenerative process of the disease. Last year's filing of its patent application has encouraged InnoMedica to proceed with the newly developed compound. "If we can achieve real benefits for patients with our technology, we are obliged to do so." Dr Halbherr is not alone in this opinion: the growing shareholder base of InnoMedica, counting more than 650 investors, illustrates the strong interest in small but innovative players in the pharma business. In order to remain independent, InnoMedica has pursued a milestone financing model, addressing a larger public in its annual capital increase campaigns.

Given the promising preclinical results in terms of efficacy and tolerability, expectations are high and oncologists are eagerly awaiting the launch of the clinical trial with Talidox. To Dr Halbherr it is clear that the progress of the project was made possible both by the highly skilled team of InnoMedica and the strong involvement of its numerous partners.

MARLY INNOVATION CENTER

THE MIC IN BRIEF

The MIC is one of the largest technology centres in Switzerland at 370 000 m². Our current facilities include available spaces for rent, of which 7000 m² are fully equipped and secured laboratories. Five buildings with an additional area of approximately 11 500 m² are being constructed. 150 companies – providing 500 jobs – are currently enjoying the benefits of our infrastructure. And we have space for new members!

In future a green eco-dwelling will be built in the immediate surroundings. This will provide an entire ecosystem for people who work on site. Quality of life is essential to success.

marly-innovation-center.org