

WholeFoods Tours Sabinsa Corporation and Sami Labs Facilities in India

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Celebrating the Pongal festival.

Transparency is a buzzword that has been used a lot recently, but **WholeFoods** did get to experience firsthand the dedication to transparency from East Windsor, NJ-based Sabinsa Corporation and their parent company and counterpart in India, Sami Labs. We had the privilege of travelling to Bangalore, India to visit several of the company's manufacturing facilities and then to Salem in Tamil Nadu to see farms where some of their herbs are grown, including turmeric, coleus, amla and more.

The five different production facilities we toured all serve different purposes, each equally important to the end result. From continuous extraction to the very high tech Super Critical Fluid Extraction (SCFE) housed in its own dedicated facility, emphasis on producing high quality material for the company's branded ingredients was proudly disclosed. With clinical research and testing being very important to the company, their R&D and testing labs are abundant with impressive equipment. They even have a nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) machine allowing them to test a level of detail on identification of substances far beyond what is expected.

One of the facilities we got to see is completely dedicated to Sabinsa's probiotic ingredient Lactospore (*Bacillus coagulans*), much of it in a closed system. Why dedicate a facility to a single material? To avoid cross contamination, something probiotics are easily susceptible to.

By touring the facilities, we got to experience the journey of how turmeric becomes curcumin and more specifically, Curcumin C3 extract, one of Sabinsa's most popular ingredients.

The tour also included visiting several farms where the raw herbs that end up in Sabinsa's branded ingredients are grown as part of their extensive contract farming program to ensure the raw materials they need are grown sustainably. In the Salem area of the state of Tamil Nadu we saw turmeric, coleus, amla and tulsi being grown, and met a number of the farmers and their families.



SCFE Facility

In addition to developing products with close eye for details, Sabinsa is also a very generous company, fairly compensating its farmers and staff and providing healthcare for them and their families. Besides giving back to its workforce, the company also built a school in Salem for the local children. Sami Labs donated jackets that WholeFoods and the other visitors distributed to the children. We had the honor of celebrating the Harvest Festival Pongal with the farming community. Sabinsa also provided the ingredients to create this festival food and made sure there was plenty to go around. What the company does for the communities is so heartwarming and we were so thankful to experience their generosity.

We saw everything that an auditor should see when brand representatives visit companies that supply their ingredients. Sabinsa invites their customers to see everything they do first hand, and encourages their customers to audit ingredient suppliers often.

Sabinsa founder Dr. Muhammed Majeed shared with us the history of the company and its growth in the United States and India over the past 35 years to become an international company. He explained that this was accomplished by adding assets to build upon what they had already and what was needed rather than relying on others or turning over control to investors who might want to cut corners. Sales have grown steadily and more research is always being done to create more products as well as new ways to use current products, such as testing different delivery systems such as chewables, gummies, functional foods and bilayer tablets.



Shaheen Majeed, marketing director holding turmeric.

Now, Sabinsa's ingredients can be found in many well known products. Most of their ingredients are branded, protected by patents and because clinical research is very important to Sabinsa, have been used in many published studies. This all means a great deal for the products you carry that have a Sabinsa branded logo on the bottles.

Besides supplements, Sabinsa also provides nutraceuticals and cosmetics, so the company encompasses many facets of the natural products industry. Sabinsa's level of dedication shows in the commitment and pride its employees show in their work and the investments in equipment and testing that have been made to advance the company. Dr. Majeed is committed to keep the growth coming.