

## UK's organic body digs into nanoparticle debate

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

#### INTERVIEW

**Paolo Gasparrini,  
L'Oréal China**

page 3

#### CITY FOCUS

**Delhi, India**

page 7

The debate on nanoparticles resurfaced in the industry last week after UK organic certification body the Soil Association banned them from its certified products and called for a freeze on their use in all cosmetics. Taking cues from researchers who have warned of unknown risks associated with nanomaterials, the Soil Association said cosmetics players including Estée Lauder, L'Oréal and Boots have placed profitability over consumer health by marketing products whose safety has not been established.

Nanomaterials have been used in applications like anti-aging creams, mineral makeup and sunscreens, including L'Oréal Paris's Plenitude Revitalift and the Boots Soltan suncare range, the latter of which uses nanoparticles of titanium dioxide to create a nearly transparent anti-UV cream.

French beauty group L'Oréal says the Soil Association's nanoparticle claim is unfounded. "L'Oréal uses only nanoemulsions and nanopigments, which are proven to be absolutely safe. The type of products developed in cosmetology differs from nanomaterials used in other industrial sectors by their form and their molecular structure, their mode of use and the way they interact with the environment," the group said in an e-mail statement.

Other companies have insisted their nano-based products passed muster in clinical tests, but researchers have yet to reach a consensus, saying risk becomes harder to assess as the cosmetic industry employs a wider variety of materials. "Size and material is an impor-

tant factor," London Centre for Nanotechnology technical director Takashi Matsuura tells *CosmeticNews*. "Some cosmetic formulas are safe as the nanoparticles used are too big to penetrate the skin. But a few major companies are starting to use smaller particles in their formulas to achieve better colors or functionalities, and we don't know yet if these are truly safe or not. Every time the technology develops, it should be rigorously tested by health organizations, but new products are usually tested by [the manufacturers]," he adds. Mark Bünger, research director at US-based Lux Research tells *CosmeticNews* that "since the body breaks nanoparticles down into their molecular constituents, they are unlikely to pose any health risks," but adds that this depends on factors including the chemical composition, size and shape of particles.

Studies by regulatory bodies have also underlined the complexity of the issue. A European Commission report published last summer found no conclusive evidence that nanomaterials currently used in cosmetics products posed health risks when applied on normal skin, but said there was insufficient data to assess their impact on abnormal skin. A fuller assessment is due this summer.

Despite the controversy, the global market for nanoparticles in beauty products is expected to soar over the next five years, growing an anticipated 16.6% annually to reach some \$520m by 2012, according US technology thinktank BCC Research, compared with \$204.6m in 2007. Legislation permitting. CTr

# A world tour of holiday sales

Following on from last week's special report, *CosmeticNews* continues its world tour of holiday sales, looking particularly at the products that made the bestseller lists across the globe.

## France:

French department-store operator **Printemps** was hard-hit by TV advertising from its competitors in December, beauty buyer Fabien Petitcolin tells *CosmeticNews*. Sales fell over the same period in 2006, he reveals, and the major brands, available in competing stores, were particularly hard hit. "Our niche and exclusive brands, including *Annick Goutal*, *L'Artisan Parfumeur*, *Lutens* and *Diptique* performed really well, as did *Gucci by Gucci*, which we had a pre-launch for, and *Tom Ford*." In skincare, *Dr Hauschka* and *L'Occitane* were also big sellers. Gift sets for both fragrance and skincare—in which gift offers are increasingly common—also sold well.

Perfumery chain **Marionnaud** (AS Watson) made the most of the holiday season, initiating its first domestic ad campaign. "We have registered a stronger increase in sales in December than during the rest of the year [when compared with last year's figures]," Marionnaud trading director Lyse Costa comments, nevertheless warning of the danger of interpreting preliminary results. The chain's top three brands for December were *Boss*, *Dior* and *Lancôme*, while product leaders were *Le Mâle* by Jean Paul Gaultier, *Nina* by Nina Ricci and the AS Watson makeup set.

## Italy:

According to Simone Destefanis, beauty and wellbeing category manager at Italian department-store operator **La Rinascente**, sales in the flagship store in Milan Duomo, which has recently refurbished its beauty department, grew 31% on year for the 2007 holiday season. The best results were in fragrances, which saw a 56% increase. "People have been attracted by

exclusive products," he explains. "We have seen increased sales of *Private Collection by Tom Ford* but also *Narciso Rodriguez* and *Marc Jacobs*. In holistic skincare, *Molton Brown*, which we are retailing exclusively in Italy, saw strong sales of its gift sets, but *Freeze 24.7* and *Go* have been the bestsellers."

## Spain:

Top-10 men's and women's fragrances in December at leading Spanish department-store **El Corte Inglés**:

### Top-10 fragrances in December 2007

#### Women's fragrances

- 1 *Insolence* by Guerlain
- 2 *D&G Light Blue*
- 3 *Agua Fresca Rosas* Adolfo Dominguez
- 4 *DKNY for Woman*
- 5 *212 CH* by Carolina Herrera
- 6 *ckIN2U for Women* by Calvin Klein
- 7 *Hugo Deep Red* by Hugo Boss
- 8 *Ange ou Demon* by Givenchy
- 9 *Aire* Loewe
- 10 *Versace Bright Crystal*

#### Men's fragrances

- 1 *Hugo* by Hugo Boss
- 2 *L'Homme* YSL
- 3 *Agua Fresca Adolpf* Dominguez
- 4 *Loewe pour Homme*
- 5 *D&G Light Blue pour Homme*
- 6 *ckIN2U for Men* by Calvin Klein
- 7 *Herrera for Men* by Carolina Herrera
- 8 *Fuel for Life* Diesel
- 9 *Boss Bottled* by Hugo Boss
- 10 *Polo Explorer* by Ralph Lauren

Source: El Corte Inglés

## South Africa:

Multi-brand retailer **Metropolitan Cosmetics** saw turnover double in December compared with the prior 11 months, according to Metropolitan co-founder Melissa Brown. The performance was mainly boosted by a national press campaign: "This not only brought consumers into our retail stores, but aggressively led them to our call center and commercial website," Brown tells *CosmeticNews*.

Bestselling products were: *Dr Brandt Laser A-Peel*, *Dr Sebagh Pure Vitamin C Powder Cream* and *Masaki/Masaki* by Masaki Matsushima.

## Australia:

Department-store operator **David Jones** is satisfied with its holiday business, exceeding sales targets for the season, according to its general manager of cosmetics Brett Riddington. The chain saw strong sales increases for brands including *Giorgio Armani*, *Jo Malone*, *Chanel*, *Bobbi Brown*, *Mor*, *Molton Brown*, *Napoleon Perdis*, *La Mer*, *Kiehl's* and *Ultraceuticals*. The top-five women's fragrances was led by classics from *Chanel*, *Dior* and *Estée Lauder*, but also included *Daisy Marc Jacobs*, launched in Australia just before Christmas. In men's fragrance, newness was more apparent, with *Armani Attitude* and *Diesel Fuel for Life* both in the top-five.

Celebrity fragrances took center stage at Australian department-store network **Myer**. The banner created a "walk of fame" to highlight celebrity scents for the season, its designer fragrances and cosmetics buyer Frank Kavanagh tells *CosmeticNews*. Scents including those of songstresses *Christina Aguilera* and *Britney Spears* proved popular, as did those from *David Beckham*. Classics from *Chanel* as well as *J'Adore* by *Dior* and *Beautiful* from *Estée Lauder* also performed well. "Considering that last year's Christmas period we had two of the biggest selling fragrances of all time—*Darling* by *Kylie Minogue* and *Hillary Duff*—we are very pleased with our results," Kavanagh reveals. "Sales for the week prior to Christmas were extraordinary and made up for a slow start." Outside fragrance, the chain saw strong sales for skincare brand *StriVectin's* gift sets. ■