

WFFC Fall Tech Seminar Addresses Ingredients & Reformulations

The fragrance suppliers should take a lead in defending the industry's palette, said Greg Adamson (Givaudan), during the annual fall technical seminar of the Women in Flavor & Fragrance Commerce (WFFC; www.wffc.org) in New Jersey. Suppliers, he added, should help customers to understand the artistry, complexity and innovation that are at stake when regulations are expanded unnecessarily.

In addition to Toxic Substances Control Act reform in the United States and ingredient labeling/deletion potentially taking place under the latest fragrance allergen opinion of the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS), the fragrance industry faces restrictions under customer and retailer programs. These include Reckitt Benckiser's fragrance allergen labeling program in the United States, Walmart's focus on chemicals and fragrance disclosure under its sustainability program, Target's product ingredient safety and disclosure rankings, and SC Johnson's "What's Inside" ingredient disclosure project.

This confluence of factors, driven in large part by non-governmental organization pressure, has led to an accelerating rate of fragrance palette omissions. Adamson noted that about 51 fragrance materials were dropped from the industry's palette between 1990 and 2010. Since 2010, at least 188 ingredients have been threatened, and as many as 82 currently face severe labeling or limitations under the SCCS allergen opinion. (The range of ingredients available and their unique aromatic aspects were highlighted in a separate talk by perfumer James Krivda [Mane], who presented beautiful natural ingredients, including sustainable myrrh from Namibia.)

Significant percentages of formulations currently contain decalable levels of allergens, Adamson noted. The latest SCCS opinion, in fact, triples the number of allergens that would have to be labeled. Formerly hypoallergenic products may have to label or remove allergens.

The opportunity, he argued, is to change the customer perspective on allergens. The issue is loss of fragrance signature and reformulation to accommodate the issues of the 2% of



From left: Cathianne Leonardi (Allen Flavors), Alpa Roman (Flavor & Fragrance Specialties), Gillian Bleimann (Berjé), Laure Moutet, Paige Crist (P&F), James Krivda (Mane), Lorna Hopkinson (IFF), Colin Ringleib (PepsiCo), Nancy Williams (L'Oréal) and Janice Ford (Flavor & Fragrance Specialties).

the population that is sensitized. Currently, competitive labeling and "clean" labeling are feeding the issue, he warned, and recommended taking a more sober look at the issue.

However, said speaker Nancy Williams of L'Oréal, in the development of projects, a "clean" fragrance is often desired. By clean, Williams referred to the omission of potentially endangered materials such as lialial, which may fall under the final SCCS opinion. By requesting formulations without such

ingredients, brands hope to develop fragrances and fragranced products that do not require reformulation down the road.

Even if regulations are not yet "official," Williams explained, often a consumer product company will request a new mod in a preemptive move. Just making a fragrance mod in a basic scent that does not require extensive testing can cost an organization tens of thousands of dollars in research and innovation costs. Once the packaging, facility and salary costs are factored in, the total expense can double. And that's just the cost of a "simple" fragrance change, something that consumer product companies are eager to avoid.

Williams framed the avoidance of potentially problematic ingredients as a bid to steer resources into marketing and ensuring overall market growth. As it stands, she said, even basic fragrance product development can take three years.

Lorna Hopkinson, meanwhile, outlined the labeling challenges facing colleagues on the flavor side of the industry. Because there is no global definition of a natural flavor, she said, managing a flavor brief is tricky. If something is natural in the European Union, it won't necessarily qualify as such in the United States, she noted. Echoing some of Williams' concerns, Hopkinson said that an uncomplex formula is often best for a globally launched product. She added that it is important to know what the customer wants to do on the label and urged caution with claims such as "fresh."

When it comes to ingredient disclosure, Hopkinson explained that it is perfectly acceptable to share ingredient information with customers under certain conditions. However, it is generally crucial for flavor compounders to protect formulas as core intellectual property. Finally, she explained that, as with fragrance, flavor is affected by growing customer and retailer requirements, including Whole Foods' pledge to label all GMO-containing products in its U.S. and Canadian stores by 2018.

By day's end it was clear that the complexities for ingredient suppliers, flavor and fragrance compounders, and their customers are only increasing.

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