



The making of functional food product “Labdaris”.

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“Every successful case study motivates other researchers from other fields to think more about the progress of their product’s development and commercialisation “

Linda Gabrusenoka

Head of Technology Transfer Office, Riga Stradins University

FAST FACTS

Country or Region:

LATVIA

University:

Riga Stradins University (RSU)

Business partners:

- PLPKS “Dundaga” (Dundaga)

Area of UBC:

- COMMERCIALISATION

Project start date: 2003

Project end date: On going

Keywords:

- Food industry
- Microbiology
- Lacto bacillus helveticus 7
- Dairy industry

PROJECT SUMMARY

Around 2003 research began on bacteria lactobacillus helveticus 7 and the ways how it could be used in the dairy industry. At first, a low-fat product was made, which demonstrated a positive impact on gastrointestinal tract and on health in general.

The researchers of the project were looking for a cooperation partner so that manufacturing could be started. As it turned out, most of the large dairy manufacturers were using (and still are) a technology that cannot be used for production of the product that contains bacteria lactobacillus helveticus 7. Dundaga is a dairy manufacturer that still uses the traditional method of dairy production and this method fit with the requirements that had to be met to produce “Labdaris” – the dairy product that contains bacteria lactobacillus helveticus 7.

In 2008 researchers successfully applied to Investment and Development Agency of Latvia’s program “Support for Development of Innovative companies”, and the researchers received funding so that they can bring the product to the market. Part of this grant went to Dundaga so that manufacturing could commence.

In 2011 there was a research conducted in Gailezers hospital where the product was tested for its positive and effective impact on post-surgery recovery. In 2012 this study was presented in RSU annual scientific conference.

CASE STUDY IN DETAILS

Project Background and Needs

First, it was necessary to design a food product that would contain the beneficial bacteria lactobacillus helveticus 7.

Second, there was the need to find a cooperation partner, a dairy manufacturer that could produce a food product that would contain the bacteria. It was important to find a cooperation partner that is a dairy manufacturer so that there is no need to found a new manufacturing company, which is a very costly process.

Project Solution from University’s Side

The university’s researchers have done all the necessary research work for the product to come into being. Furthermore, in

Key Objectives:

- To find a way how to use the specific bacteria in a product.
- To find a cooperation partner – a manufacturer – so that the product could be brought to the market.

Lessons learned:

- If the patent is owned by the university, then there is a bigger likelihood of gaining financial benefit from the cooperation.
- It is crucial to use external experts and mentors, who can help attract partners.
- It is easier to start the process of commercialisation with a small company because they tend to be more flexible than the larger enterprises. However, small companies have smaller financial capacity and, therefore, the progress is not that fast.

University profile:

Riga Stradins University (RSU) acquired its status as a university in 2002, however its historical roots extend back to Rīga Medical Institute, founded in 1950. Today RSU trains not only doctors, dentists, pharmacists and nurses, but also specialists in rehabilitation, public healthcare, social sciences and law. RSU has a total of 7,096 students, the majority of which are full-time students, and 423 academic staff members. There are 5,656 undergraduates studying at RSU, while the number of those studying in master's degree and doctoral programmes is 1,440. The vast majority of medical professionals working in various fields in Latvia have acquired their education at Riga Stradins University.

2008 the researchers applied to Investment and Development Agency of Latvia's program "Support for Development of Innovative companies" and was successful. The financial means obtained have been invested in the company.

Project Solution from Partner's Side

The project partner, dairy manufacturer "Dundaga" manufactures the product and brings it shops where it is being sold.

Achievements and Impact

Researchers from RSU have managed to find a partner, with the help of which they have succeeded in commercialising their research and brought an actual product to the market.

The product – "Labdaris" - has been acknowledged as being innovative by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia. Furthermore, in 2011, "Labdaris" received the "Green Spoon" quality label.

Quantifiable Outputs for University

The outputs for university have been the following:

1. The lead researcher from RSU's A. Kirchnerstein Institute of Microbiology and Virology is the owner of the patent.
2. Research done at the university has been commercialised into a real product used by consumers.
3. There have been up to four academic publications on the subject.

Quantifiable Outputs for Partner (s)

Outputs for the project partner have been the following:

1. "Dundaga" has a new product that it can manufacture and sell.
2. The product has received the "Green Spoon" quality label, showing that "Dundaga" is capable of producing product of high standard.

CHECKLIST OF PREREQUISITES TO SUCCESS

Formal aspects

- Formal Memorandum of Understanding or Letter of Intent (or similar long-term co-operation document) is signed between University and Partner(s).
- Formal practical level Co-operation Agreement is signed between University and Partner(s) which defines particular roles, outputs, reporting mechanisms and other relevant aspects.
- Project is related to at least one strategic priority of the University.

Financial and/or Infrastructure aspects

- University invests financial resources in the project.
- Co-operation Partner invests financial resources in the project.
- University invests infrastructure and/or material type (in kind) resources in the project.
- Co-operation Partner invests infrastructure and/or material type (in kind) resources in the project.
- Co-operation Partner gains monetary benefits from the project.
- University gains non-monetary but measurable and verifiable benefits from the project.
- Co-operation Partner gains non-monetary but measurable and verifiable benefits from the project.

Human capital aspects

- University is devoting its human capital, know-how, competence to the mutual cooperation, specifically, R&D staff and administrative staff.
- Help was also provided by mentors and experts from the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia's program "Support for Development of Innovative companies".

Marketing and communication aspects

- Project and/or project results are communicated within mass media channels.
- Project and/or project results are communicated within social media channels.
- Project and/or project results are presented in trade-shows, conferences, seminars, other marketing events.
- Project and/or project results are communicated within academic and/or scientific communication channels (research papers, scientific conferences and activities).
- Project and/or project results are communicated within internal marketing and/or communication channels within the University and/or Partner institution.

For More Information

For more information about the case study contact Linda Gabrusenoka on linda.gabrusenoka@rsu.lv.

For more information about the project "FROM BRIDGING TO SUCCEEDING. University and Business Co-operation Through Success Stories." and for more case studies visit www.university-business.net

For more information about the Nordplus Horizontal programme visit www.nordplusonline.org

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