

# ASIAN POULTRY

MAGAZINE

## Rhone Ma education program registers results

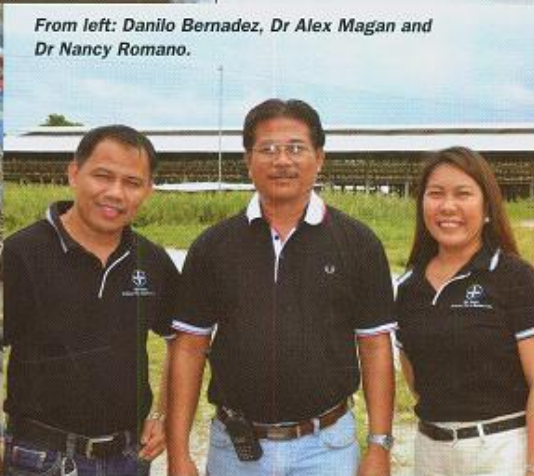


Dr Karen Yip



Dr Lim Hang Chern

From left: Danilo Bernadez, Dr Alex Magan and Dr Nancy Romano.



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# Rhone Ma's education program registers results

Stakeholders in the animal protein industry know that for their businesses to grow farmers must grow too. Animal health company Rhone Ma Malaysia Sdn Bhd sees the need to not only provide quality health products but to play the role of educator to help farmers achieve good farming practices, RACHAEL PHILIP writes.



It has been five years since animal healthcare company Rhone Ma Malaysia Sdn Bhd launched its Total Solutions Provider (TSP) package of products, services and support.

TSP has transformed the company into one that not only provides high quality products in disease prevention and control, but a company where farmers can seek solutions on other aspects of farming as well.

"It is a holistic approach in meeting our customers' needs," said Marketing and Technical Director, Karen Yip.

The company has played a strong role in educating Malaysian farmers on the use of medication and helping them to take a broader approach towards healthier birds.

"Medication is not the only answer to diseases. Preventive measures are better than cure, and the scope of preventive steps should not be limited to vaccination and medication," she said.

More important, she said, is farm management, biosecurity, good hygiene, sanitation, animal husbandry

and good feeding systems and farm practices that farmers should already have in place. Besides this, farmers should opt for quality vaccination and, when medication is used, care should be taken to ensure that it is administered properly.

Other technical services offered by the company includes disease investigation, flock health monitoring, in-house training on disease control and prevention, effective animal husbandry management systems and audit.

## Prudent use of antibiotics

According to Dr Yip, farmers are already practising good farm management. She said the use of antibiotics in the country will reduce over time as farmers learn that bacteria are developing resistance to antibiotics in animal feed. There is also growing pressure from consumers for safe food.

The National Pharmaceutical Control Bureau in Malaysia, practices a strict registration process for new



**Dr Karen Yip**

△ pharmaceutical products. This also reduces the use of antibiotics as growth promoters.

"The standards set by local authorities are high. Even if products are approved overseas, it may not necessarily be approved in Malaysia," she said.

Instead the company sees green and natural products such as plant extracts and organic acids becoming more popular on farms in the near future. In the next five years, Rhone Ma sees itself developing more towards green and environment-friendly products to fulfill the needs and expectation of consumers.

"Antibiotics as growth promoters are being phased out as farmers

are more conscious of the long-term effects of drug resistance. As an alternative, plant extracts, organic acids and probiotics are more commonly used on farms."

She added that "antibiotics are still needed in the industry but it must be used responsibly".

### Growing potential

The feed additives market is a growing market in the country. Rhone Ma estimates that the industry, which includes the sale of antibiotics, enzymes, mycotoxin binders, anticoccidial, anthelmintics and organic acids, has a potential worth of more than USD 158 million.

"Intensive farming systems,



**Dr Lim Hang Chern**



*Rhone Ma's GMP-certified plant processes include mixing, blending and dilution of concentrates.*

## Providing solutions

Rhone Ma was established in 2000. Its sister companies are Vet Food Agro Diagnostics (M) Sdn Bhd and Asia-Pacific Special Nutrients Sdn Bhd.

The company has invested heavily in infrastructure, operational services and after sales services to ensure that quality products reach their customers. It also provides hatchery and field vaccination, and equipment services, as well as technical consultation.

Before launching the TSP package, the company only supplied vaccines and provided equipment to farmers.

"Vaccination was the main product that we offered initially. We included vaccination equipment in the building blocks performance package to our customer," said Dr Yip.

"Right now, because of the hot weather, we see an increase in demand for electrolytes and other health supplement products to help hydrate the animals."

Among the brands the company carries are Merial, CoopHAVET, Special Nutrients, Premex, Joosten, Berg & Schmidt, Adisseo as well as products produced by its own GMP-certified plant. The plant does mixing, blending and dilution of concentrates as well as small scale production of some other products.

higher expectations on livestock performance, raw material quality issues and high disease challenges are seen as contributing factors that drive the growth of the feed additives sector in the Malaysian animal health industry," said Techno Commercial Manager, Lim Hang Chern

"Poultry farmers should be vigilant of diseases that could have a high economic impact," he said.

The country's broiler meat and egg production too has indicated high potential growth for the next five years. Although population growth in the country is not strong, the growing export market especially to the Middle East, is an area that has helped to spur the growth of producers.

Rhone Ma estimated that the avian biological sector, which includes broilers, layers, breeders and ducks, was worth more than USD 32



**Left: Rhone Ma sister company Vet Foods Agro Diagnostics has invested in top-grade scientific equipment at its laboratory allowing the company to conduct a wider scope of tests.**

partner to work with."

Apart from that, Rhone Ma is looking at vertical expansion.

"We also hope to explore the feed additives and premix market to strengthen our products line. We will also strengthen the capacity of our GMP plant in producing products for the local and overseas market," said Dr Lim. *Ap*

million in 2013. On top of this, avian pharmaceuticals such as drinking water applications, should have exceeded USD 50 million.

Rhone Ma's strength also lies in its laboratory services provided by sister company Vet Food Agro Diagnostic (M) Sdn Bhd. This laboratory has four sections, namely serology, microbiology, chemistry and molecular biology.

"We have invested in top-grade laboratory equipment, allowing us to conduct a comprehensive scope of tests at our facility," said Dr Lim.

### Challenges & opportunities

The strict requirements from the authority for product registration are among the challenges to the growth of animal health companies in Malaysia. This could slow down the registration process as suppliers are required to submit detailed documents.

Also, the industry is seeing strong competition among animal health companies, according to Dr Lim. "There are many pharmaceutical product players from multinational companies and local distributors and our customers have high expectations on their farm performance."

As such the company hopes to expand its product distribution beyond Malaysia to countries such as Indonesia, Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries in the near future.

"This is mainly to distribute our in-house manufactured products. We have successfully registered our products in Indonesia. In Vietnam we are in the process of registering our products and looking for the right

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