

Supplier of the Month



Collette Kakuk,
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Layn Natural Ingredients is one of the world's largest innovators of natural botanical extract ingredients and solutions serving the biggest brands in food, beverage, flavor, nutraceutical, personal care, animals and pets for more than 25 years. Truly vertically integrated, Layn offers nearly three decades of experience in providing a fully secure, manufacturer-direct, transparent and scalable supply chain. From seeds and agronomy, to extraction and formulation, Layn is committed to quality, innovation and sustainability. Its world-class R&D opera-

tion includes more than 2.2 million square feet of state-of-the-art extraction, and global innovation centers throughout the world to conduct research, ensure quality and provide formulation and application guidance.

Collette Kakuk is vice president of global marketing for Layn Natural Ingredients and its subsidiary, HempRise. She has 30 years of experience in branding, customer experience, qualitative and quantitative market research, predictive modeling and competitive analysis, including food service, food processing, manufacturing, restaurant, banking and top Fortune 100 business consulting. Her passion for people, animals and the planet fuels her interest in natural botanical ingredient marketing and innovation. She proudly served in the U.S. military and holds an MBA from the Ross School at the University of Michigan.

NIE: In September 2020, the company launched Nutrae by Layn. What are the goals of this new division of the company?

Kakuk: We're excited about the value we bring to the market with Nutrae by Layn and our other strategic customer-focused business units. Many know of Layn Natural Ingredients as the world's largest direct manufacturer and innovator of stevia and monk fruit natural sweeteners, but we also offer a full portfolio of value added, science based botanical ingredients:

- *Plantae by Layn:* for human food & beverage applications
- *TruGro by Layn:* for pet and animal nutrition applications
- *Nutrae by Layn:* for supplements, sports nutrition and personal care

The goal with Nutrae by Layn is to provide a robust portfolio of proprietary, science-backed, branded functional botanical solutions, single ingredients, and formulation support that provide our nutraceutical customers with compelling product differentiation, supply chain consistency and reliability, and value. Our Nutrae group is skilled in providing clean label, natural botanical ingredient solutions and formulation support to meet all functional objectives surrounding nutraceuticals and across all consumption formats.

We offer specific botanical solutions and ingredients for inflammation support, mood, stress, sleep, cognition, sports nutrition, and more, with more than 25 years of managing a fully sustainable and traceable global supply chain.

NIE: In October 2020, Layn acquired Chengdu Wagott Bio-tech Co., Ltd. What do acquisitions like this mean for the company?

Kakuk: Wagott is China's largest exporter of green tea extract, and leading producer of tea and polygonum extracts. The Layn and Wagott product lines are highly complementary, and with the integration of advanced capabilities, technology, equipment and world-class talent, Layn will continue to advance its global botanical leadership, particularly in providing scientifically backed active ingredients including polyphenols (EGCG, theaflavins, resveratrol, etc.), theanine and others.

This acquisition enables us to integrate and leverage some of the industry's leading resources, along with intellectual property, talent, management, products, processes and industry relationships to deliver increasing compelling value to customers. Layn provides ingredients and formulation guidance to some of the world's leading brands in food, beverage, flavor, nutraceutical, personal care, animal nutrition and pet health. We are now able to combine Layn's exceptional practices, processes & technology with those of Wagott to expand opportunities and bring increased value to the marketplace, particularly in bringing tea extracts, including natural polyphenols and L-theanine to market.

NIE: The company has been in business for more than 25 years, what do you think the future of Layn looks like?

Kakuk: Having already established itself as a global leader in monk fruit and stevia extracts, Layn Natural Ingredients is investing heavily in validating the efficacy of strategic botanical extracts through pre-clinical and clinical trials to develop a robust scientific portfolio that will distinguish itself as one of the most premium, vertically integrated purveyors of standardized botanical extracts in the world.

Our portfolio and capabilities span across industries, with specific focus in polyphenol rich antioxidants including tea extracts:

- natural technological antioxidants for food protection and shelf life, and
- natural metabolic antioxidants to improve the health and well-being of people, pets and animals.

Layn will continue to work tirelessly to root out adulteration in the nutraceutical industry by furthering its work with industry and trade associations with guidelines and knowledge needed to identify sub-standard materials that impugn the integrity of the botanical industry and all there is to offer in our collective work to benefit the health of people.

Layn is committed to expanding its portfolio by developing new innovations designed to improve the stability, bioavailability and functionality of its ingredients for human and pet nutrition, personal care, and food and beverage.

Its R&D department will continue its work on identifying new, safe and effective botanical compounds that will enhance human and pet nutrition.