

Under New Management



We are pleased to announce that as of February Biopharma is under new management.

The Biopharma Group, comprising Biopharma Process Systems and Biopharma Technology Ltd, was previously owned by founder and MD Tony Gaster.

Replacing Tony as MD and taking over the day-to-day running of the company is our new Chairman Andrew Cowen.

Andrew is a Rank Foundation Trustee and is a grandson of Lord Rank. Andrew originally qualified as a chartered surveyor. He spent 10 years in the banking industry working in trade finance and moneybroking, and spent another 10 as managing director of a professional sports business. As well as running Biopharma he is also currently director of a bio-molecular engineering business, a charity and a religious tv, radio and internet content provider. Andrew says,

“I chose to invest in Biopharma because of its first-class management team. Its technological platform, whilst stable, also allows sufficient room to generate commercial advantage.”

Andrew aims to expand and develop the research that BTL currently carries out in freeze drying, and to increase its an international provider of a unique and highly specific set of services.

Tony will be staying on part-time as Business Development Manager and general consultant to Andrew, to ensure continuity and minimise disruption to our services.

New 2-day Training Courses

New format, new location and new lecturers— it was all change this March for the first of our new “Freeze-Drying: Product and Process” courses at our site here in Winchester.

Our previous offices were always far too small for us to host courses on-site, but our move to larger premises last year means we finally have the space to hold training sessions in-house. This means smaller lecture groups, a shorter, more tailored lecture program and also a hands-on laboratory session focusing on the freeze dryers and Lyostat and Lyotherm instruments and Karl Fischer titrators.

BTL scientist Tom Peacock joined the regular lecturers to present a series of presentations on formulation analysis and the Lyostat2 instrument. Tom has been with BTL since 2006 and has travelled extensively to conduct installation and training on our instruments, but this marks his introduction to BTL’s training courses as a lecturer.

The “Product and Process” course followed a new, two-day format and was aimed primarily at formulation scientists and quality control officers. Alternative courses for engineers and technicians, “Design and Engineering”, will also be held on-site with the first scheduled for May.

Our comprehensive three-day courses will return to Europe and America later in the year.



Course diary.....

April 27th-28th—Freeze Drying: Product & Process. Biopharma House, Winchester

May 17th-18th—Freeze Drying: Design & Engineering. Biopharma House, Winchester

June—Freeze Drying: Product & Process. Biopharma House, Winchester (dates TBC)

September – 3-day Comprehensive Training Course. Amsterdam, the Netherlands (dates TBC)

October – 3-day Comprehensive Training Course. San Francisco, USA (dates TBC)

November – Freeze Drying: Product & Process and Design & Engineering. Biopharma House, Winchester (dates TBC)

Headspace Moisture Analysis

Frequency Modulated Spectroscopy (FMS) is a non-destructive technique enabling analysis of the moisture and pressure in the vial headspace. Used in conjunction with Karl Fisher analysis this technique can yield important information about the freeze-dried product and assist in fast and efficient analysis of a large number of sample. Studies on headspace moisture can also be used to assess stopper moisture contribution.

BTL has been researching the application of headspace moisture and investigating headspace moisture / Karl Fischer correlation.

FMS analysis is now available as a service from BTL.

To read our research poster on the subject, go to our website at www.lyophilizationtechnology.com/publications.htm. The poster is titled "Where is the water?"



Intelligent Biofilter Control System

Biopharma Technology has recently become part of the Adapond project, which is an EC-funded 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, based in Rakvere, Estonia.

The Adapond project was instigated due to evidence from fish farm recirculation systems showing that new starters experience 30-80% loss in sales almost unavoidably in the first year during the adaptation period of a bio-filter. This is accompanied by the failure losses from fish medication and seasonal depressions counting for more than €70-90M annually in Europe. Low reliability of bio-filter systems is considered the main reason why people avoid entering the fish farming business.

The EU consortium consists of SMEs and academic institutions across Europe. The aim of the project is to produce an "Intelligent Bio-filter Control system". This will involve research to increase the understanding of how the bio-filter operates, with the ultimate objective of developing an automatic process of in-house collection, storage and application of adaptive bacterial cultures for fish farms.

Isobel Cook, who is responsible for BTL's internal and collaborative research projects, will be primarily involved in the project. Biopharma's role in this project is to advise and research the suitability of freeze drying as a method of preserving the bio-filters.

New faces

Marc Townell—R&D Scientist

Marc joined BTL in late 2008 after graduating from the University of Southampton with an MChem in Chemistry. Marc will be involved in performing R&D studies, analytical work and report preparation as well as handling enquiries. Marc will also be jointly responsible for installation and training of Lyostat2 and Lyotherm2 instruments.

Earlier this year Marc installed a Lyostat2 freeze-drying microscope system at Cubist Pharmaceuticals in Massachusetts, USA. Cubist is a biopharmaceutical company focusing on products that address the acute care environment. Marc is pictured right with two of Cubist's scientists and the Lyostat2 system.



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