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Manufacturer says refinery tech aids whey process 'purity'

By Neil Merrett, 05-May-2009

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A range of whey processing technology is designed to allow dairy groups to produce value-added ingredients with long-term reductions to costs and environmental impacts, according to its manufacturer.

Upfront Chromatography claims that its Rhobust Whey Refinery technology combines a number of its previously available techniques as part of a focus on providing high-value proteins from crude whey in a more sustainable manner.

Allan Lihme, technical director for Upfront Chromatography, told DairyReporter.com that adsorption technologies like those used in the refinery had traditionally been perceived as non-economical due to water consumption rates.

"Our technology alone and the combined package of Rhobust Whey Refinery platform has proven this perception to be wrong," he claimed.

Lihme suggested that, through the customised designed of the Rhobust refinery, the manufacturer had chosen to play up the system's potential benefits to greener processing as a result of water consumption levels required by the system.

'Purity'

As a result of the system design, the manufacturer suggests that the technology can help manufacturers obtain very specific protein fractions in what it claims are higher purity forms by cutting lipids, minerals and other non-protein substances.

"We are capable of producing alpha-lactalbumin with higher yields and increased purity," states Lihme. "This protein is used in infant formulas and Our technology can minimize the presence of the non-human allergenic protein, beta-lactoglobulin, without cost increases and denaturing of the main product."

Upfront Chromatography suggested that in meeting consumer requirements for whey products, three main process areas were currently being used by the industry.

The group said that these included precipitation, where whey is treated with heat or chemicals, a process it says that can occasionally potentially leading to denatured products in some cases.

Other possible measures include classical membrane filtration and classical Ion exchange methods that can also have drawbacks relating to lower product yields, claims Upfront Chromatography.

The manufacturer says that by combining its previously available membrane techniques with the Rhobust EBA system in whey fractionation, it can ensure a more effective method to provide whey products.

"Due to the column design, there are no issues with back pressure even at extreme flow rates and the system has no tendency to clogging due to the dynamic, expanded, nature of the adsorbent bed," states Lihme. "The combination of our technology with classical membrane processes solves all of the above problems and results in the efficient manufacturing of high quality products."

The company says that the technologies used in the system have been previously available, but added that they can tailored under the new refinery concept for a number of operations.

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