

PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release
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Sime Darby Oils, UKM collaborate in world's first comprehensive clinical trial for fatty liver treatment using NATRIÉO Tocotrienols

KUALA LUMPUR, 11 February 2020 – Sime Darby Oils (SDO) and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) today announced a collaboration in the world's first comprehensive clinical trial to determine if the palm oil derived Tocotrienols, an antioxidant in the vitamin E family, could be used as a therapeutic approach for the treatment of Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD).

A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) for the collaboration which is expected to run for 2 years was signed by SDO's Managing Director, Mohd Haris Mohd Arshad and UKM's Dean of Faculty of Medicine and Professor of Medicine, Professor Dr. Raja Affendi Raja Ali, representing UKM's official signatory to the MOA, Vice Chancellor, Professor Dato' Ir Dr Mohd Hamdi Bin Abd Shukor. The parties are expecting to see preliminary results within six (6) months from the commencement of the clinical trial this month and a full publication of the findings in 2021.

NAFLD is a common disorder affecting non-alcohol consumers and refers to a group of conditions involving the accumulation of excess fat in the liver. Early-stage NAFLD does not usually cause any harm. But if left untreated, it can lead to serious liver damage, including cirrhosis, a disease in which the liver does not function properly due to long-term replacement of normal liver tissues with scar tissues.

Professor Dr Raja Affendi, a Consultant Physician in Gastroenterology & Hepatology at the Hospital Canselor Tuanku Muhriz & UKM Specialist Centre, who is also the lead investigator of the clinical trial said, that the prevalence of NAFLD in Malaysia could be approximately 15-30% of the general adult population. This projection is based on the high prevalence of other metabolic diseases in the Malaysian population that are commonly associated with NAFLD, such as high blood sugar, hypertension, and obesity. About 60% of Malaysian with slightly elevated cholesterol levels have NAFLD, and yet, no medication is available for the disease.

"We are running a randomised double-blind clinical trial with a localised demographic sample focusing on a full-spectrum testing of fatty liver, the first and the most comprehensive of its kind in the world. At the moment it is hard to find clinical trials involving a population that has diverse racial profiles such as the Malaysians," he further added.

The Tocotrienols that will be used in the clinical trial studies are extracted from palm fruit (*Elaeis Guineensis*) harvested exclusively from the plantations of Sime Darby Plantation (SDP), the world's largest producer of Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO). SDP together with the Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB) pioneered the palm Tocotrienols extraction process in 1993. SDO currently produces a Tocotrienol supplement called NATRIÉO, which has been made commercially available by the company since 2002.

Earlier studies had shown that Tocotrienols is a powerful antioxidant and is effective in reducing arterial blockage, lowering bad cholesterol and preventing a variety of ageing-related disorders due to reduced free radicals and DNA damage, among others.

"Tocotrienols is an antioxidant classed as a vitamin E that is unique to palm. It is 40-60 times more potent in antioxidative properties than the commonly known tocopherol, which is usually extracted from other vegetable oils," said Professor Dr Raja Affendi.

Mohd Haris meanwhile said the MOA between SDO and UKM could pave the way for more collaboration between the two organisations in the future. The move, he added, could also be a catalyst for SDO to conduct further research on human health issues, in line with the Company's interest to diversify into various downstream activities and business opportunities.

"The importance of developing partnerships with institutions such as the UKM is that it allows for both the development and practical implementation of our findings.

"This collaboration further solidifies our goal to be evidence-based in our claims, especially in the nutrition business. It also aligns with our aspiration to venture into the Nutrition and Wellness industry," said Mohd Haris.

"NATRIÉO Tocotrienols are extracted from palm fruits through our molecular distillation process. With our 'Source to Seal' guarantee, we assure that our tocotrienols extracted from this process is of the highest quality and the freshest, due to our 24-hour processing timeline upon arrival of our premium quality oils from our plantation," he further added.

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ABOUT UNIVERSITI KEBANGSAAN MALAYSIA (UKM)

UKM is one of five research universities in Malaysia with a strategic direction to be the regional leader in academic and research excellence. The university's mission is to be ahead of society and time in leading the development of a learned, dynamic and moral society. It ranks 160 in QS World University Ranking 2019/2020 and 12 in Top 50 under 50 category. As its name suggests, UKM is a university which is international in its outlook but maintains and cherishes the national cultures and values at the same time. In taking various initiatives to enhance its academic and research capabilities, UKM has established partnerships with various organizations.

ABOUT SIME DARBY OILS

In March 2019, Sime Darby Plantation group rebranded its entire Downstream operations to Sime Darby Oils (SDO) to realise the full potential of SDP as a trusted brand for its sustainability credentials and superior product qualities.

With an extensive global network of facilities in eight (8) countries (Malaysia, China, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, South Africa, Thailand, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea), SDO's operations oversees the trading, manufacturing and sales and marketing of oils and fats products, palm oil-based biodiesel, nutraceuticals and other derivatives. Under this core business, SDO manages and operates 11 refineries with a total capacity of 3.8 million metric tonnes (MT) per year and a total bulking installation capacity of 300,000 million tonnes (MT).

ABOUT SIME DARBY PLANTATION

Sime Darby Plantation is the world's largest oil palm plantation company by planted area, producing about 4 percent of the global CPO output. It is also the world's largest producer of Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO), with a CSPO production capacity of over 2.46 million MT.

As a globally integrated plantation company, Sime Darby Plantation is involved in the full spectrum of the palm oil value chain, from upstream to downstream activities, R&D, renewables and agribusiness. Its upstream operations which consist predominantly of oil palm cultivation, harvesting and milling are spread across Malaysia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Its downstream business, known as Sime Darby Oils, spanning across 14 countries worldwide, involves the manufacturing as well as the sales and marketing of oils and fats products, oleochemicals, palm oil-based biodiesel, nutraceuticals and other derivatives. Sime Darby Plantation is also involved in rubber and sugarcane plantations, as well as cattle rearing.

With a workforce of over 95,000 employees and a strong focus on operational excellence, research, innovation and sustainability, Sime Darby Plantation is one of the largest companies on Bursa Malaysia with a market capitalisation of RM35.16 bn (USD8.47 bn) as at 10 February 2020.

ABOUT NATRIÉO:

NATRIÉO is a health supplement product line under Sime Darby Plantation that leverages the health benefits of TRI.E TOCOTRIENOLS. NATRIÉO TRI.E TOCOTRIENOLS packs the goodness of Tocotrienols to help preserve health irrespective of age and stage in life so that life can be lived to the fullest.

Tocotrienols are found scarcely in nature, with one of its richest sources being palm oil. This natural extract presents unique biological properties including a higher antioxidant potency and anti-inflammatory properties to provide greater health benefits.

For more information on NATRIÉO, please visit: www.natrieo.com.