

Inside *Energique*, Natural Remedies from the Heartland

Foreward

by Michael Braunstein

If you are like two-thirds of Americans, recent polls suggest, when you are confronted with a non-emergency health issue, you turn to non-conventional medicine first. Whether it's a cold, pain, sleeplessness or a more serious ailment, most Americans are likely to first head to the health food store for vitamins or nutritional supplements; or perhaps to the chiropractor or acupuncturist or to their herbalist. Including everything from reiki and healing touch, massage and colonic therapy, diet change and detox — so-called “alternative” therapies have become more in-demand than ever.

It may be a general distrust of institutionalized conventional medicine, as some write, or perhaps Americans want to avoid the dangers of prescription drugs. There are certainly many reasons held by many people but one fact is undeniable: The interest in natural medicines — homeopathy, herbals and nutritional supplements among them — has increased in quantum leaps in the past four decades, even in the conservative Midwest.

It may surprise some that one of the world's foremost producers of natural medicines started only 45 miles from Omaha over two decades ago. That company, now combined with associated companies, has been known as *Energique, Inc.* since the mid-1990s and has grown along with the industry. For those who are curious about the source of natural medicines, herbal tinctures and homeopathics and wonder about their production, we offer a look inside the world of *Energique*.

CHAPTER 1

THE OWNER

Sprawling over ten acres in the middle of Iowa farmland and occupying seven buildings, the inner workings of one of the world's leading natural medicine producers is barely 45 miles from the heart of Omaha.

Energique, Inc., and its associated company, *Apotheca Naturale, Inc.*, are situated

on the eastern slopes of the gently rolling Loess Hills that border the Missouri River. It's a small, industrial park setting with large, modern metal buildings on the western edge of Woodbine, Iowa. The low-lying buildings are a stark contrast to the grain silos on neighboring farms.

Though the buildings appear of recent vintage, and some are, the company is no upstart or latecomer to the industry of natural remedies production. Its roots reach back to 1987.

“Dr. Jack Hinze literally started in a garage back then and the company was originally called Iowa Distributing Company and that's really what it was, a distributing company,”

naturopath. He remains active in the natural medicine field and gives lectures and talks around the country. A lot has changed since the early days in the garage.

Rettig, 62, and his wife, Kathy Simon, acquired *Energique* in March of 2005. A lot has changed since that acquisition, also. The two main companies, *Energique* and *Apotheca* are now under the Rettig flag.

“Jack has visited here a couple times since we bought the company and put the whole thing back together,” Rettig observed. “Remember, this was his baby and it flew apart not only because of the buyouts but also family issues and stuff.”

ROOTS IN NATURAL MEDICINE?

Though Hinze was a naturopath and Ph.D. in pharmacy, Rettig wasn't always so interested in natural remedies as he is now. When asked if he always had an inclination toward natural healing his response is blunt.

“Never. Never,” he says. “What led me to it was a change in my life about 15 years ago. I had some issues with heart at the time. I went on a path of spirituality.”

“Then I got onto the trail of some natural remedies

because of my heart condition. Not to the extent of having any major knowledge; I would go to a dietician, would hear what the heart specialist had to say.

“In fact, prior to that, I would eat steak everyday. I would abuse my body; never had anything of a health conscious nature. That just was not part of my consciousness.”

Rettig and Simon wed about five years ago. They had known each other 34 years



Owner Jesse Rettig at his desk. In front of him is a salt lamp. “When I got this salt lamp, I was told it would change my life. They were right.”

said current *Energique* owner, Jesse Rettig. “Then Scott and Joyce Beach bought, at first, half the company and then the whole of Iowa Distributing and it became *Energique*. The *Energique* name was an incarnation from the Beach's after they bought the whole company. *Apotheca Naturale* is a separate corporation that existed and continues to be a manufacturing company.”

The company founder, Hinze, now residing in Phoenix, is a doctor of pharmacy and a

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prior and came back together, fell in love again and married.

“Yes, one of those kinds of stories,” he said.

“We were both very successful and we felt we had enough energy to do one last deal; a deal that would give back to the Universe for all of our good fortune. We looked around for opportunities that did that. We looked at helping the elderly. We looked at disease-related fields. We looked at housing for people. And then we came across this company. I knew nothing about herbs, homeopathics, nutritionals five years ago, nothing. We purchased the company in March of 2005.”

GIVING BACK

So how does *Energique* fit that need of Rettig and Simon to “give back to the Universe?” Rettig answers with a short explanation.

“You know, yesterday I traveled to Chicago to meet with a company that’s going to process some berries for us,” he relates. “Part of that trip was to discuss with them their nutraceutical research. Part of that conversation was to develop profiles and information about the specialness of this berry that we’re going to bring to the marketplace.

“As we sat in that meeting, what the research director said was, ‘We’re willing to do this research but we want to take a piece of the action. And one of our main focuses is how do we protect what it is that we own.’

“See, in the nutritionals area, it’s very hard to protect because ingredients are delineated on a label so anybody can take your homework and research and profit from it.

“As I sat in that meeting, that [approach] doesn’t resonate with me because it’s never my intention. I mean, we’ve already done research that I’ve given away to anybody who asks me the question. I’m so proud of this berry and my belief is that I don’t have to own the marketplace. If I have something that can save lives and is healthful, I want everybody to have it. What a wonderful thing. Something that people can do something with heart disease, with skin, with aging, you know? If I’m the first one to bring it to market, I’m still going to make more money than I’ll ever need. It’s not about the money. It’s about the fact that there is a possibility, there’s another way. It’s not a drug. It’s not killing people. It can impact heart

disease. It’s going to impact urinary tract infections. It’s rich in resveratrol. It impacts cancer. Those are incredible things. I get juiced at the idea that I can give something to somebody that can change their life.”

And Rettig is talking about only one product out of thousands that the company makes.

FEEDBACK FROM CUSTOMERS TELL THE TALE

“Our customer service reps get phone calls all the time and callers will say, ‘We took this product and it did this or it changed that.’

“I’m writing back to a lady right now about celiac disease. We have a product for that and she heard about it and she’s emailing me. I’m going to give her that information. I don’t care [to keep it secret]. What a wonderful place. Her husband has a business and they’re going to sell [the product]. She’s a naturopath and she’s going to spread the information in writings and workshops. That’s wonderful. I don’t have to own that product. In fact, I’ve actually told the guy who formulated it, ‘Forget about trying to license this or to patent it. It’s impossible.’

“Dean knows, as a formulator (Dean Dobmeier, now Sales Manager), ‘Just give me the ingredients and I’ll hit the right formula.’ You do a little of this, a little of that and if the interaction works...

“We’re not pharmaceutical companies. We’re here to heal people. And that’s how it gives back. It gives back in huge ways. It really does. That’s what we do. That’s what happens here.”

CHAPTER 2

INDUSTRY GROWTH AND WHAT BIG PHARMA WANTS TO KEEP SECRET

Public interest in natural remedies has grown exponentially in the past few decades. *Energique* has, too.

“The day we walked in the doors as owners, there were 15 employees. There are now 104,” said Rettig, describing a seven-fold increase that took place in less than five years.

“It’s difficult to estimate sales growth because we’ve combined companies and some growth is due to that. This year, the

sales will be triple what they were when we walked in the door.”

Despite the tremendous growth in the natural remedies industry, Rettig believes it would be bigger if not for one thing.

“We, *Energique*, are just a small piece of the [natural remedies] pie. But the growth is amazing. The only thing that’s held down nutritionals and homeopathics and herbals, and this is my bias, but the pharmaceutical industry has made it sound like we are a totally unregulated industry. You know, like this is the Wild, Wild West. It’s so untrue.

“We have regulators in here all the time,” said Rettig. “We are a regulated, licensed drug manufacturer because we do homeopathics, which are classified as over-the-counter drugs.”

In 2007, the FDA adopted strict rules for good manufacturing practices, or GMPs, that set broad goals for companies to ensure quality and safety of their products. Companies like *Energique* now must meet those standards. Most of those quality control requirements were already in place.

“Nutritionals have just gone through their most significant regulation in history, requiring what are called GMPs, good manufacturing procedures to be in place,” noted Rettig. “Our requirements for labeling and bottling and handling a product have just spiked; it’s huge. Yet, detractors try to say [natural remedies] have no proof [of efficacy].

“Do I have a blind study that’s controlled by drug company money that manufactures results?” he asked rhetorically.

A TOUGH EXAMPLE

“There was a recall of the homeopathic nasal gel Zicam because [over a period of ten years] 130 people lost their sense of smell — out of literally millions of units that were sold,” he continued. [Editor’s note: Associated Press reported that there were over 1 billion sold since 1999.]

“Do you know how many people died last year from taking an overdose of aspirin? 20,000 died. Didn’t lose their sense of smell. They died.

“The Associated Press came out with a thing about Zicam and homeopathy in general and how bad it was and saying it’s untested. The public perception of what we’re being fed [by the mainstream media]

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is incredible,” said Rettig. “This whole thing on viruses and the number of people dying because they don’t take H1N1 vaccine, this whole information is so skewed.

“Let’s talk vaccines. What is a vaccine? Well, it’s a microdose of the live or dead pathogen, the component that stimulates your body to overcome the particular disease or condition that you’re trying to alleviate.

“And a homeopathic? It’s a microdose of an ingredient that will help your body overcome whatever the disease is. Exact same thing. On the one hand, I call something a vaccine done by a pharmaceutical company, which they say is totally okay. But if it’s homeopathic it gets called a snake oil. It’s the exact same principle. Homeopathy is where vaccine science came from.

“Drugs don’t cure. Drugs alleviate symptoms. They don’t cure. Herbs, natural ingredients support the body’s ability to cure itself. We cure ourselves.”

WOLVES AMONG US

Just like any industry, companies in the natural remedies arena can have varying degrees of integrity or goals.

“The [natural remedy] industry in some cases has been driven by greed, unfortunately,” observed Rettig. “The greed comes by people wanting to isolate, same as the pharmaceutical companies, isolate the special component within a product they can make claims about. Often where new products come about is from that special research that isolates.”

Sales manager Dean Dobmeier explains further.

“In the botanical world, that [corporate] greed results in some manufacturers searching for the so-called active ingredient in an herb and then isolating and standardizing to that component. Instead of using the entirety of the plant, it ends up with a spike of that component. And that’s the pharmaceutical kind of mindset that we don’t have.”

Rettig describes why isolating a component doesn’t work out so well.

“Understand, that if I isolate, even with a natural ingredient, that’s going to cause the possibility of an overdose in the body. An overdose causes the body to react and that’s where we get side effects.”

He returns to the comparison of vaccines and homeopathy.

“Go back to how Dr. Samuel Hahnemann developed homeopathy. He was essentially overdosing subjects, in a sense, to see the reaction to the substance, the effect. He tracked the patterns and deduced that if someone has a particular resulting symptom from a substance, he can give them a diluted amount of that substance and the body will use that as a reactivity to resolve that condition. Like cures like.

“The same happens with nutritionals. But what some developers have done is focused on isolating rather than giving a balanced ingredient. Nature makes balanced ingredients. That’s what nature does. The body is regulated to nature. We need to consume balanced stuff. It’s the true definition of holistic.”

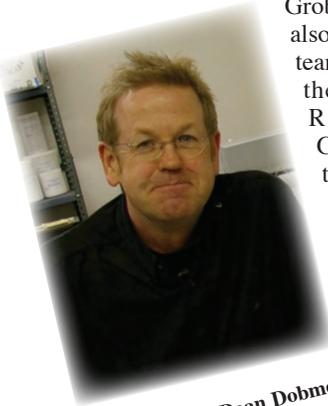
CHAPTER 3

THE SALES MANAGER, THE DOCTOR AND THE SCIENTIST

THE SALES MANAGER

Dean Dobmeier is my connection at *Energique* who led to this article about the company and the production methods of natural medicines. Many in Omaha know Dean as a brewmaster who put some local breweries on the map.

Along with Gary Grobeck, Dean is also half of the team who bring the Sunday Roadhouse Concerts to Omaha. Herbal extraction, distillation and brewing are



The Sales Manager: Dean Dobmeier set up the original herbal extraction process at *Energique*. His product knowledge follows him now into the area of sales management.

pretty closely related skills and it’s no surprise Dobmeier ended up at *Energique*.

I had met Scott and Joy Beach, who were previous owners of *Energique*, back in the mid-90s. Scott had invited me to Woodbine

to visit the operation numerous occasions but I never found the time. I was glad I waited to see it in its current incarnation. Things have changed a lot at *Energique* in the past decade. Dobmeier was my guide as we toured the seven buildings on the *Energique* campus.

“I was in Omaha at Jones Street Brewery for some time and then at Breckenridge,” Dobmeier said, describing two of Omaha’s first microbreweries. “Scott Beach was a regular with whom I became friends. One thing led to another and when *Energique* made the move to extract in-house, I initially came here to head up the extraction facility. That was about ten years ago.”

After a stint away from the company, Dobmeier returned, but not as head of the extraction process. His in-depth knowledge of the *Energique* lineup of products and the exacting details about how they are made and processed made him more valuable as sales manager. He now handles the outgoing sales of the entire product line and also is in charge of sales for the custom processing they do for other companies. But his eyes light up when he talks about the extraction process.

“The extract apparatus that I helped set up and originate, Jesse took to the next level,” he said, referring to current owner Jesse Rettig.

“The process involves a gentle heating, equivalent to body temperature, and then condensation. What we used originally for condensation were these recirculating chillers, essentially little refrigerators. It was loud and inefficient. Jesse came in and set up a geothermal system. The process has never been done like this.”

I asked Dobmeier the question that many skeptics of homeopathic, herbal and natural medicines always ask. What about quality control and dosage control?

“We are a licensed FDA OTC (over-the-counter) drug manufacturing facility,” he revealed. “So we have to adhere to GMPs (Good Manufacturing Practices) and the fact that the FDA governs us requires that we follow strict guidelines. The level of our quality control is a perfect example of that. We have our own laboratory for QC and every single product that goes out of this installation is rigorously tested. You’ll see that lab when we tour.”

Most mass production companies, even meat processors, do not test product coming in. The onus is put on the vendor and most

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producers simply take their word for it. Not so at *Energique*.

"The same lab is used to thoroughly test every raw material or product that comes in that is used in production," Dobmeier continued. "If it doesn't meet our quality standards, it's rejected."

THE DOCTOR

Leaving the building that holds Dobmeier's office along with the customer service department, fulfillment center and some administrative offices, we crossed the short distance over what was once Iowa farmland to another building.

Inside, we saw new construction as the company is still in expansion mode. The temporary filling stations where hair-netted and gloved workers were manually filling bottles will be moved shortly into the new permanent location. We stopped briefly outside the homeopathic medicine laboratory to don hairnets ourselves.

"Everybody gets one of these; workers and visitors alike," Dobmeier announced.

The homeopathic lab is where medicines are made to FDA guidelines. Homeopathics may go out to the consumer as pills, liquids, creams, salves, sprays or other media. The blending and dilution of the

medicines is an exacting science and is carried out following the protocols set forth in the United States Pharmacopeia. Charged with overseeing those procedures is Dr. Sheron Ponnambath, Homeopathic Research Assistant. Ponnambath has been with *Energique* since 2004.

"We operate from the United States Pharmacopeia (USP)," Dr. Ponnambath informed. "Homeopathic medicines are classified as drugs and were given that status about [70] years ago due to the work of a

sympathetic United States Senator who was also a homeopath. On the last day in his office, he made sure that was achieved."

[Ed. Note: The Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act of 1938 (sponsored by New York Senator and Homeopathic Physician Royal Copeland) recognized homeopathic remedies as drugs.]

"The USP gives all the directions for preparations and the FDA recognizes us because we strictly follow these set instructions," Ponnambath said.

Not only do the procedures need to be followed to the letter but the materials used to formulate the medicines are strictly regulated. For example, water cannot simply be pure or distilled water, it has to meet strict purity standards set forth in the Pharmacopeia.

"We are an FDA regulated facility which uses

all the USP Grade or FDA approved components. Water has to be USP Grade. Alcohol has to be USP grade and all the incoming herbs and chemicals have to be tested as per USP and FDA regulations," Ponnambath continued, echoing what Dobmeier had also told me. "Everything that comes in is tested in our lab even though they all are tested before the providing company issues them to us. And our final product is tested before it is packaged and sent to the customer."

In many ways, like its herbal extraction lab, *Energique's* homeopathic lab goes beyond FDA standards.

"For example, we have to use USP alcohol, but we don't have to use organic alcohol, but we do."

THE SCIENTIST

It's not enough to start with pure ingredients and follow federally regulated manufacturing procedures. The extra step for complete quality control is to redundantly test those ingredients when they come in and test every product before it goes out. The responsibility of that intricate business falls on the shoulders of Dr. Bay, pronounced Bay.

Bay heads up the testing laboratory.

It's on the second floor of a central

building that also houses

the product archive department. Not only does *Energique* test every element used and manufactured, they retain samples of both incoming materials and outgoing finished product for three years and one month. This is to have a baseline sample in the event of any purity questions arising in the marketplace.

Bay started at *Energique* ten years ago. His academic credentials are impressive.

"I received my Bachelor's from Beijing Medical University in 1982. Then I worked at the FDA and then the Institute for Drug Control," he described.

Dr. Bay was justifiably proud of receiving his Ph.D. from Chinese University of Hong Kong.

"It's a very famous university," he beamed. "This year's winner of the Nobel Prize for Physics was the President of that university, Professor Charles Kao."

Bay was energetic, reveling like a kid showing off his toys as he described the varied scientific equipment used to test the physical components found at *Energique*. Here was where the rubber meets the road when it comes to quality.

Bay reminded why testing is paramount to *Energique's* business. Their products are put in the body, not on it.

"Our product is medicine. It's a different kind of product," he said. "Maybe you buy a jacket or a shirt at Wal-Mart and if it has



Dr. Bay heads the quality control lab at *Energique*. Every material that comes in and every product that goes out is fully tested.



In the homeopathic medicine laboratory, Dr. Sheron Ponnambath checks some data as production workers retrieve raw materials in preparation for homeopathic dilution. All ingredients must be USP approved since homeopathics are a regulated drug. Homeopathics may be delivered in liquid dilutions or solid form, like pills. *Energique* processes both, using pill presses and automated capsule filling lines.

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a defect, maybe it doesn't affect you or you can take it back. You can live with it. But for herbal products it's different. Same with homeopaths. For our product, quality must come first. And first in that is safety... then effectiveness."

Bay showed some of the more sophisticated of the testing equipment. To the layman, it looks like boxes and computer screens, but Bay described how important the equipment is.

"Every chemical has a unique 'fingerprint.' With the ultraviolet light profile, the spectroscopic signature and more, we can identify any substance or any adulterant.

"Here in our laboratory, we have all the equipment needed to preserve and maintain the quality standards we demand. We have what I call, 'Total Control Quality Control.'"

Dobmeier added that the lab serves not only as a quality control operation but a problem-solving nexus as well.

"The lab and Dr. Bay help us figure out solutions to challenges that may arise in the production flow. That's what science does."

CHAPTER 4

THE INNER SANCTUM: THE EXTRACTION LABORATORY

Perhaps the highest profile and flagship product for *Energique* is its line of herbal extractions or tinctures. *Energique* has been processing its own herbals for the past ten years.

Extracting the active components from nature's botanical medicines is not a difficult task. An individual can do it in the kitchen with a few supplies. But giving that same process the attention an individual would and producing it on a commercial scale requires an exceptional level of dedication.

If you look up "herbal extract" at Wikipedia, it will give you oversimplified information. It describes an extract as the active oils that are precipitated by exposing an herb or plant to alcohol, then discarding the remains, the solid matter. But even in the 16th century, the iconic physician Paracelsus knew that there is more to it than that. The medicinal quality lies in the whole material, not just in an isolated few oils. Reductionist medicine is not what natural medicine is about.



In the extraction lab, 72 beakers are attached to a proprietary processing system (blurred for confidentiality) that is unlike any in the industry. The modifications are the result of engineering design by owner Jesse Rettig.

Paracelsus knew, and simple chemistry tells us, that an herb or natural substance does indeed have alcohol-soluble components. And it also has water-soluble components.

And finally, after those two components are released, there remains

the mineral or solid component. Unless an extraction process accounts for all three, something is being left on the table. The extraction method used by *Energique* leaves nothing on the table.

On our visit, Jesse Rettig and Dean Dobmeier led us behind closed doors that displayed signs warning, as allowed." The process

Energique uses is not a secret but the specific method they use to carry out that process is uniquely theirs. Behind these doors is where a hundreds-of-years old technique is carried out with 21st century technology.

"The process we use is known as the Spagyric process," said Dean Dobmeier, who headed up the original extraction laboratory and is now company Sales Manager at *Energique*. "It's not the way most of the industry does it. It's a much more time-consuming method, a much costlier method, but it's the right way to do it."

The Spagyric process was first described by Paracelsus in the 16th century. The word itself is a portmanteau of two Greek words meaning "to tear open" (spao) and "to collect" (ageiro). It's perfectly descriptive of the process. The process dismantles the components of the herb or botanical and then reassembles them. In other disciplines, it is known as alchemy.

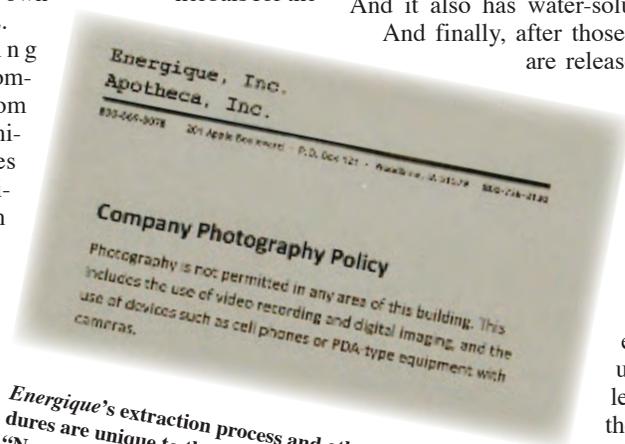
Around the perimeter of the large room are the supplies of raw material that are used. Bins and barrels contain the more than 650 different herbs that *Energique* extracts at the facility. Near the center of the room is where the activity is. Gloved and wearing hairnets, beard nets and in some cases lab coats, workers carry out varying stages of the extraction process.

AN ANCIENT PROCESS DONE A NEW WAY

The heart of the room pulses with energy along two waist-high tables. Tubes and conduits range up to the ceiling from 72 extraction vessels. They cross over to a special device that regulates the extraction process. We walked between the tables that held the spherical beakers containing the liquid extractions. In some, the liquid was calm and placid. In others, there were gentle bubbles. And intermittently, some would erupt in a churning action, almost violently.

The process is essentially the same as when *Energique* first started extracting about ten years ago. But when Rettig and his wife bought the company about five years ago, he engineered some unique elements to improve the process vastly.

"It's difficult to describe how Jesse revolutionized this herbal extraction process" said Dobmeier. "It's unique in the industry."



Energique's extraction process and other procedures are unique to the industry. Signs advise visitors of the "No pictures, please" policy.

"No camer-

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He approached one of the vessels to explain the labels.

"These two chemical symbols on this beaker identify alcohol and water," pointing to the label on a glass vessel about the size of a basketball. The beaker was cradled in an insulating base about three inches thick. Dobmeier continued to give the details of the first part of the extraction process.

"We place the botanical material in a fabric sockette and extraction begins with alcohol. It removes the alcohol-soluble components. It can take a day or up to a month, depending on the nature of the material being processed," Dobmeier explained.

When all the alcohol-soluble component is out of the herb or botanical, the alcohol-based extract is set aside. Then the water extraction part begins.

"Once the alcohol part is complete, we expose the same material, called the marc, to the water extraction process.

"What's amazing is that by the end of the alcohol extraction cycle, it loses much of its color. When we then expose the material to water, it comes back a different color, a richness, because of what the water is extracting now."

This demonstrates that the water is extracting completely different components from the marc.

During the entire extraction process, the solution is kept at a warm temperature to enhance extraction. As we observed the processing flasks, the liquid inside some would activate and spontaneously erupt in bubbles.

"The bubbling activity happens when oils, particularly, start to accumulate down in the globe," Dobmeier added. "There is surface tension created and sometimes they'll break that tension and pop. This is where you want to keep the heat in the process at a very low level, around body temperature. You can rise a few degrees above that and all of a sudden it increases the volatility inside such that it can pop."



Organic spinach is being extracted in this Batch #14,954. In a year, *Energique* will ship over 1 million bottles of extract from over 650 different botanicals.



Blackthorn in its seventh day of the water extraction step. Bubbles occur spontaneously when precipitants break the liquid's surface tension in the beaker.

Energique has used this same process since they began to extract tinctures but when Rettig took over, initiating a more unique and proprietary method, there was a period of trial and error.

"In fact," said Dobmeier, "We have had explosions. It's gotten that violent. There's so much energy in there. That happened during the learning curve days of this new process so we don't have those now."

Rettig allowed some photos but cautioned against any that would reveal the unique parts of the system.

"Don't photograph that vessel. That is our special design vessel that makes this work.

"Our 72 extractors produce over one million bottles of product a year," Rettig offered.

MAKING IT HOLISTIC

With the herbal extracts, the finished product is usually offered as a solution containing 25% of the alcohol-derived extract and

25% of the water derived extract. That alcohol percentage is typical of the extract industry so users are accustomed to that. *Energique* also offers a premium line for most of the extracts that is 50% alcohol solution. It's the pure liquid extract that comes straight from the vessel, which at the end of the

process is 50% alcohol, the other 50% being the water-extracted solution.

"Some customers prefer a lower alcohol content for whatever reason, so we offer that," said Dobmeier. "And we do offer the premium potency line, too."

Finally, in all cases, the herbal or botanical material, known as the "marc," is reduced to ash in a special kiln. This final mineral component is returned to the solution, bringing the entire entity back to wholeness in an extracted combination. Hence, Spagyric, "to tear open," and "to collect."

"One of the many unique characteristics of our process is using the small batch vessels," continued Dobmeier. "This intricate process does not lend itself well to mass volume production. That's what makes it special, that's what makes it expensive to do and effective. What's normal in the extraction industry is hundreds of gallons at a time, swirling it around with paddles, and it gets all mixed

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up and it's oxidizing and that's what most people get."

DO IT RIGHT

Doing it the right way makes a difference in the end product. Big volume extraction has another pitfall. Owner Rettig gives an easy-to-understand explanation of a chemistry principle in extracting solutions.

"Another specific difference in the way we do things here compared to most of the industry is that we keep the two extractions, water-extracted and alcohol-extracted, separate for a reason," said Rettig. "Dean has told you that first we extract with alcohol then we extract with water. Now, alcohol and water have their own ability to dissolve and hold the extraction in solution. The way to see that is that if I take an alcohol extraction and add a drop of water into it, instantly you'll see a little precipitate in it because I've lessened the alcohol's ability to hold that extract in solution. Every time I water it down [during extraction], I lose more capability. That's why a 25% solution may not be as strong as a 50% and that's because of the ability to hold the particulates of the extraction in solution. So 25% I have less in solution and therefore it's a less strong solution, right?"

"A normal extraction by others would take, say, a gallon of alcohol, a gallon of water, dumps them in together and swish them around with the herb or botanical. The presence of the water during the extraction process now decreases the capacity of the alcohol to extract by 50%. Same for the water. The individual components have lost their full ability to extract."

Energique does not expose the alcohol solution to water until the very end of the process, after all of the alcohol-soluble

component and the water-soluble one has been extracted.

At *Energique*, the entire extraction vessel is airtight. Unlike the giant vats a mass production extraction would use, the extract is not exposed to oxygen during the process. The vessels contain liquids of all hues and colors.

"Because most extractors don't do what we do, the major

ity of extracts that you buy in the store is brown," noted Rettig. "Yet look at the color of the extracts in these vessels here. So why do other manufacturers' extracts just look brown? With ours, the color remains because of our special extraction method.

"What happens when substances are extracted and the extract hits air, it oxidizes," he explained. "It starts dying. What does rust do to metal? It's oxidizing. Same thing happens with extracts. But because we are doing extraction in a [sealed system], that oxidation doesn't take place. You get a much purer, much more medicinal, much more efficacious product."

VIBRANT VESSEL OF ENERGY AND LIFE FORCE

There is no doubt that you enter a very special room as you walk into the extraction laboratory. It's a palpable sense of energy. Think of the way you felt if you have ever walked into the Lied Jungle in the middle of a January snowstorm. There is that sense of "aliveness." Now put it in strictly energetic terms.



"This color, this vibrant color, the greens, the reds and I walk in here and I just feel energy coming from them," says owner Rettig. "It's a kinetic energy you can feel. It's the energy of the life force right here. Every time I look through here, it's exciting to me."



Many tinctures are "singles" consisting of one herb or botanical alone. Others are blends of herbs that are combined for a synergistic effect. One such is their Echinacom formulation that contains echinacea, goldenseal and more to specifically address the flu. The combination formulas are combined to exact amounts right in the extraction area.

Inside *Energique*, Natural Remedies from the Heartland

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“Every time I walk in this lab, I get the same thought,” said owner Rettig. “I get the same chill. I mean, I love these extracts. This is what it’s all about. This color, this vibrant color, the greens, the reds and I walk in here and I just feel energy coming from them. It’s a kinetic energy you can feel. It’s the energy of the life force right here. Every time I look through here, it’s exciting to me.”

CHAPTER 5

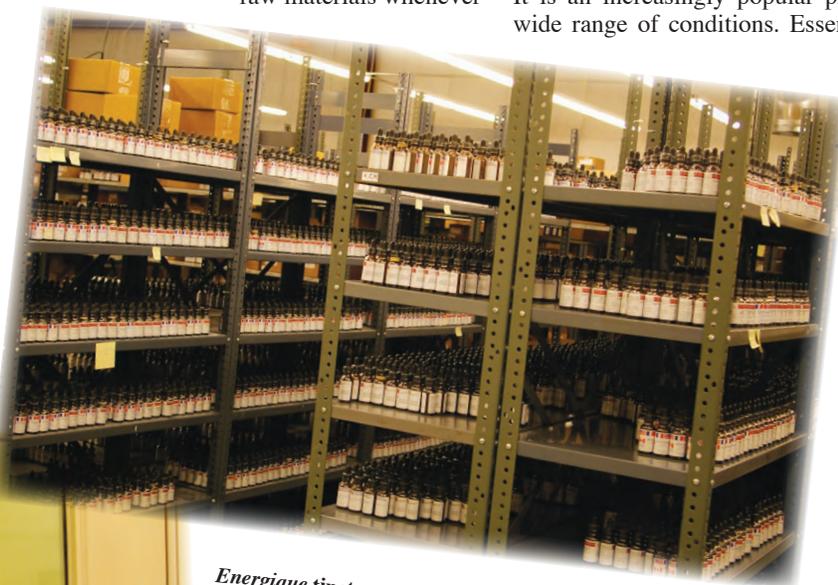
THE PRODUCTS

Natural remedies are what the public wants and that is what *Energique* produces.

Energique, Inc. carries an inventory of 3500 products that are

ethical and reliable suppliers around the world and prefers to use Certified Organic raw materials whenever

Medicinal aromatherapy uses pungent essential oils from plants to treat ailments. It is an increasingly popular practice for a wide range of conditions. Essential oils are



Energique tinctured herbals bottled as finished product and ready to be packaged for shipping. There are over 650 herbals



The yellow signs requiring protective nets and clothing are everywhere, including here in a pill pressing clean-room.

described in four main categories: herbal or botanical extracts, homeopathic drugs, medicinal quality essential oils, specialized nutritional supplements.

Energique has produced liquefied herbal extracts in-house for over a decade. The extraction laboratory operates using proprietary methods that are unique in the industry. The extracts are available as single herbs, herbal combinations formulated for specific health conditions, and rainforest botanicals. The company secures its bulk herbs from

may occur.

Energique operates a federally regulated homeopathic preparation laboratory and maintains one of the largest inventories of single homeopathic remedies in the U.S. Homeopathics are most usually delivered in small pill doses. *Energique* also have homeopathic combination formulas designed for specific health conditions. They offer a line of homeopathic tonics, gels, sprays, and salves to address common ailments such as arthritis, inflammation, diaper rash, halitosis, general first aid conditions, and others.

possible.

In addition, *Energique* uses Spagyric processing to produce the liquid herbals extracts. The Spagyric method takes time and is complex but it does produce the best method of extraction. In its process, *Energique* virtually eliminates exposure of the herbal extractions to oxygen, thereby reducing the amount of oxidation that

another product line from *Energique*. The oils are medicinal grade, unaltered, uncut, and free from pesticides and synthetic substances. The company offers over 50 different essential oils in sizes as small as half-ounce. Several combination oils are also available.

Finally, *Energique* offers nutritional supplements ranging from minerals and vitamins to enzyme formulas and glandular products.

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The most amazing part of the story is that here, in the Midwest, in a state that is covered with genetically modified corn and soybeans from fencerow to fencerow; in a state that has the greatest number of confined pig feeding operations, jammed with hogs cheek to jowl by the thousands — here, in Woodbine, Iowa, there exists an oasis of sanity that honors the natural healing ability of the body and adheres to the strictest of quality codes, delivering natural medicines to the world. 🌿