Cross-section companies involved in Traditional phytotherapy

1.Company characteristics

- Usually carrying in between 100 and 600 single substances, often including specially prepared ingredients, mineral and animal ingredients, mainly in pre-dosaged form.
- Also dispensing an indefinite number of tailored formulas resulting from the combination of these substances, following the prescription of a therapist qualified in the specific field (TCM, Ayurveda, etc...)
- Carrying a number of OTC end products for general use, usually under food supplement regulation.
  Notification procedure as Food Supplement partly achieved in EEC member states using positive lists, after being submitted to safety evaluation.
- 90% of the plants used show some consumption history as food.
- Some critically important herbs are claimed to be Novel Food.
- HACCP traceability is required. Food GMP quality control is applied. HACCP control and complete analytic files/batch are required.
- Import duty in EEC: 9.5 %. VAT is 6 %.

2. Traditional system characteristics

- Rarely use single ingredients. Classical formulation can range from 2 to 30 ingredients.
- Usually following a health advice/traditional evaluation by a qualified practitioner.
- Attributed action is contextual within a traditional evaluation system and emphasizes on maintaining general homeostatic balance rather than intending to bring on specific pharmacological changes. Health claims refer to energy patterns and “humores” rather than organic pathology and anatomical localization. (“Médicine de terrain”)
- Toxicity is contextual (depending on preparation, formulation, dosage). Tried and tested traditional detoxification methods are used.
- Monographs focus on traditional use and epidemiological data.
- Full spectrum plant material (totum) is used and prepared according to specific procedure. Supercritical extraction methods are not used in traditional preparations.