

## THE SOLVENT EXTRACTORS' ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

M/S A.P. Solvex Ltd., a leading Processor of Rice Bran and producer of 'Ricela' Brand Rice Bran Oil has been conferred the **First National Award – 2007** for Research and Development in the Medium Enterprises category, instituted by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India to **Mr. A.R. Sharma, Chairman & Managing Director** by the Hon'ble Prime Minister in a function held on 30th August, 2008 at New Delhi.

M/s A.P. Solvex Ltd. has made a pioneering effort in the country to develop an eco-friendly, health-friendly and economical process for the production of Refined Rice Bran Oil – a unique cooking oil produced from the nutritious brown layer of rice known as Rice Bran.

The Award will encourage other Companies' engaged in production of Rice Bran Oil too and would go a long way to explore full potential of Rice Bran Oil and make available to the consumers the most nutritional rice bran oil.

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### Press Release

## Producers of "Ricela" Rice Bran Oil bagged National Award for R &D



Mr. A.R. Sharma, Chairman of A.P. Solvex Group of industries based at Dhuri (Punjab) has been conferred the **First National Award – 2007** for Research and Development in the Medium Enterprises category, instituted by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India. The award was presented to him by the Hon'ble Prime Minister in a function held recently at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. The award carries a cash prize of Rs. 1,00,000, besides a Certificate and a Trophy.

Briefing the media about his achievements, Mr. Sharma claimed that he made a pioneering effort in the country, to develop an eco-friendly, health-friendly and economical process for the production of Refined Rice Bran Oil – a unique cooking oil produced from the nutritious brown layer of rice known as Rice Bran.

Mr. Sharma, after his post graduation in Law, in 1986, entered the industry engaged in the production of Rice Bran Oil. In those days, almost the entire quantities of Rice Bran Oil produced in the country, were mainly used for making soaps and detergents. However, in countries like Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Thailand, this oil had been used as a premium edible cooking oil. It was popularly known as "Heart Oil" in Japan because of its scientifically proven cholesterol lowering properties. Mr. Sharma was upset about the fact that a country like India, which is the second largest producer of paddy in the world after China contributing about 22% to the total world production of paddy, was using this precious oil mainly for non-edible purposes. He made it a mission of his life to revolutionize the Rice Bran Oil processing in India.

In the year 1992, he along with some of his friends named Mr. P.D. Garg, Mr. Arun Goyal, Mr. Ravi Goyal, Mr. P.K. Singla and Mr. Vijay Goyal, formed a company under the name and style of A.P. Solvex Private Limited. A small 80 T.P.D solvent extraction plant for extracting crude Rice Bran Oil was set up at Dhuri in the year 1993. In the year 1994, the company decided to set up a refining unit for producing Refined Rice Bran Cooking Oil and a 25 T.P.D refining plant was commissioned in 1995. The conventional refining technology which was used to refine common vegetable oils was not suitable for refining Rice Bran Oil. Hence, there was a need for development of appropriate processing technology for refining Rice Bran Oil. After a lot of hard work for few months, Mr. Sharma was able to develop a unique process of Physical Refining for producing good quality Refined Rice Bran Oil. He filed a process patent with the Government of India, which was registered in his name. Unlike light coloured refined oils produced through the conventional process of chemical refining, golden coloured refined oil is produced in this process without the use of harsh chemicals such as Caustic and Acids. This novel process ensures retention of high levels of health beneficial nutrients in the refined oil, which are lost in chemical refining process.

Today, A.P. Solvex Group of Industries has emerged as the largest Rice Bran Oil Refining group in the country, with a capacity to process about 350 tonnes of Rice Bran Oil daily. The parent company i.e. A.P. Solvex Ltd., Dhuri has been bagging "Shri B.K. Goenka Award". instituted by The Solvent Extractors' Association of India, for being the Highest Producer for the past seven consecutive years. The turnover of

the group has shot up from Rs. 5 crores in 1993-94 to Rs. 385 crores in the year 2007-08. The company targets to achieve a turnover of Rs. 500 crores during the current financial year.

Besides marketing the product in consumer packs under the brand name "Ricela", the company is also supplying Rice Bran Oil for other leading brands such as Saffola-Gold and Sundrop-Heart, which contains 80% Refined Rice Bran Oil. Keeping in view the growing awareness about health benefits of this unique oil, the leading player in snacks segment, PepsiCo has also started using this product in their preparations such as "Kurkure", "Lays" and "Uncle Chips". The other players in the snacks segments such as Nestle, Haldiram, ITC Agrotech ( Bingo), are also making trials to use Rice Bran Oil for their snacks. Very recently, Dhara Vegetable Oil and Foods Co. Ltd. have also shown keen interest in getting a tie up with this group for production and packing of Rice Bran Oil and its blends under their brand name " Dhara". In view of the growing awareness about the health benefits of rice bran oil, the company has decided to increase its capacities by another 150 tonnes per day at Dhuri during the current year. The group is also setting up a 400 T.P.D. Rice Bran Oil extraction and 75 T.P.D refining unit at Jagraon, which will be commissioned in the month of November.

Mr. Sharma, a former President of The Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA), claims that the efforts of his group have revolutionized the Rice Bran Oil scenario in India and today the country has emerged as the largest producer of Refined Rice Bran Oil in the world producing about 2.5 lakh tonnes of Refined Rice Bran Oil.

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