



(l-r) Ahmad Younis, Secretary General, JAICC, Gavin Lee, International Business Manager and Siobhan Moyna, Bimeda and Evelyn Harrington Director JAICC.

Bimeda has expanded its presence across the Middle East by delivering quality products and developing a loyal customer base in the region, as its international business development manager AMEA (Africa, Middle East & Asia) Gavin Lee explains.

Healthy growth

Honoured recently for its hard work and commitment with an Excellence in Trading certificate from the Joint Arab-Irish Chamber of Commerce (JA-ICC), Bimeda has considered the Middle East as a major focus for more than 30 years and “it is therefore very rewarding to receive such a prestigious award,” according to Gavin Lee, international business development manager AMEA, Bimeda.

“We would like to think that Bimeda is very well recognised in our markets. Thirty years has certainly help us build brand and product recognition. Bimeda’s motto is Global Excellence in Animal Health. Through its 40 plus years in operation, Bimeda has developed a strong focus on developing high quality goods, using the highest quality raw materials and delivering excellence from production right through to the end user,” he comments.

An international developer, manufacturer and marketer of veterinary pharmaceuticals and animal healthcare products, Bimeda’s broad product range spans all animal species, such as cattle, sheep, goats, camels, poultry and a very strong portfolio of equine products.

“We offer therapies in key areas, such as parasite and mastitis control. We supply a broad range of injectable and oral anti-biotics and anti-inflammatories. We also make products to treat diseases of particular importance, notably diseases transmitted by ticks. All of these products address the major concerns of the region,” Gavin explains.

The Dublin-headquartered company has 525 employees worldwide, with seven state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities in Ireland, UK, Canada, USA, China and Brazil, and five development laboratories.

“We are present in over 65 markets worldwide, with an operational presence in 8 markets in the Middle East. We are trying to expand our global footprint currently through a mix of organic growth and an acquisitions strategy,” he comments.

Committed to a vigorous research and development programme, Bimeda allocates a significant percentage of its annual revenues to this, funding work in Canada, Ireland, the US and China.

“At any one time, there are literally hundreds

of products being brought through the various stages of its development pipeline: from discovery, to ‘under evaluation’, early and late development, registration and recently approved products,” Gavin comments. The firm has secured hundreds of marketing authorisations worldwide, he adds.

Founded in the mid-1960’s, the company concentrated on the domestic Irish market initially, yet rapid expansion and acquisitions followed, Gavin explains.

“In 1975, it acquired Constant Laboratories and in 1977 Clonmel Healthcare was brought into the fold. In the 1980’s and 1990’s, the company expanded both at home and abroad. This brought about the initial entry to the Middle East and connection with the JAICC,” he says.

Between 1997 and 2007, five acquisitions in the USA, Canada and Mexico put Bimeda firmly on the map in the Americas, while 2011 saw Bimeda acquire strategic businesses in both South America and Africa.

The company recently invested in a joint venture research lab in the booming Chinese market, providing a direct route to rapid growth and development in Asia, he reveals. The company manufactures its own-branded products as well as brands under licence for some of the biggest and best known distributors, agents and peer companies.

Over the past 30 years, Bimeda has operated in a broad range of countries in the Middle East, including Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the latter its biggest market there. Bimeda’s long-standing visibility in these markets, coupled with its quality products has cemented a well-recognised product range in each of these markets, Gavin believes.

Asked about overcoming the challenges of the economic downturn in the Middle East market, Gavin says that Bimeda’s customers “know the quality of all our products, and as such, we have developed a loyal customer base, who have remained with us through these taxing times.”

The pharmaceuticals industry is one that does not necessarily have the more volatile peaks and troughs of other industries, he says, “though naturally we are susceptible to global economic change. 2009 marked the decline in the animal health market, as a result of trimmed expenditure by people on animals due to the negative impact of recessionary conditions.”

“But with the stabilisation of the economic conditions, the markets also stabilised. The global animal health business is a €22bn market. As the world’s population rises, more and more focus is going on animal welfare to help feed the growing population,” he adds.



“We have set up a network of strong distributors in these markets and continue to see a lot of opportunities in the region. The region is very focused on food security, with certain nations trying to align themselves with countries around the world with high agricultural potential,” he says.

“Certainly, Ireland is one of those countries, with our global exports at an all-time high in 2012. Certainly we hope to be part of these large-scale agricultural projects in the Middle East, where we can contribute our expertise in the area and forge strong partnerships with Governments and organisations focused on animal welfare,” he adds.

Commenting on the challenges of working in the Middle East market, Gavin comments that, “naturally, there are challenges to all aspects of the business, from political, economic, foreign exchange, international logistics, language and cultural differences, but this is no different to doing business in any other part of the world. Yes, we made mistakes along the way but it is important to recognise these and learn from them.”

As Business Development Manager for AMEA, Gavin is on the road circa 50% of the time. “While abroad, I am usually meet with our national distributor, who represents us in the particular market, and assists us in the promotion and sales of our product range.”

“We are very committed to our distributors, in that we don’t have a direct sales force selling to end users in these markets. We are therefore very dependent on these distributors. I am always on the look-out for new opportunities or potential new suitors to help expand our business,” he adds.