



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**TSX Venture Exchange: FYT**

## **SKIN WHITENING PATENT IS ISSUED TO FYTOKEM**

*-- Fytokem's First Patent is Issued --*

**Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, February 26, 2003** - Fytokem Products Inc. (Fytokem), a leading producer of *Function-Certified™* plant-based ingredients, today announced that the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has issued a patent on the use of its Tyrostat™ line of products for the inhibition of the tyrosinase enzyme. This enzyme is a key enzyme involved in the control of pigmentation of skin. A product able to inhibit production of the tyrosinase enzyme will provide skin whitening ability.

The skin whitening market worldwide is a multi-billion dollar venture with the greatest potential in Asia. This regional market continues to be anchored by Japan with the fast emerging China market growing at an unprecedented rate. The market in Japan was estimated to be US\$ 5.6 Billion in 2001 where over 25% of all personal care products contain skin-whitening actives. The greatest growth potential lies in China where the market is estimated at over \$1.3 Billion. The market in North America is focused on the lightening of age and liver spots.

Fytokem's Tyrostat™ line of skin whitening actives is being used in about 30 cosmetics products and one pharmaceutical product worldwide. The majority of these consumer products are marketed in Asia and are produced by both local cosmetic companies in Asia and worldwide industry leaders such as Revlon.

The Tyrostat™ line of products covered in the patent comprises potent natural extracts of the Rumex species of plant, alone and fortified with ascorbic acid. The ascorbic acid-fortified product, known as Tyrostat™-11, has demonstrated strong stability over time, overcoming one of the common difficulties with products currently in the marketplace today. The Tyrostat™ line of products is marketed worldwide through agreement with Atrium Biotechnologies Inc. of Quebec City.

The *Tyrosinase Inhibitors from Plants* patent (US Patent No. 6,521,267), issued by the USPTO, marks the first patent issued to Fytokem. A similar application has also been making its way through the Canadian Intellectual Property Office. Fytokem has four other patents pending in major jurisdictions throughout the world, covering a range of bioactive plant extracts and their constituents. Fytokem has a continued commitment to research and development of natural plant extracts, many of which are indigenous to Canada and have unique phytochemical properties. Protection of its research efforts is achieved through an intellectual property program in which the Company pursues specific use and production process related patents.

### **About Fytokem Products Inc.**

Fytokem Products Inc. is a Canadian life sciences company engaged in the discovery and commercialization of novel *Function-Certified™* plant-based substances – extracts, phytochemicals and bioactive molecules – for use as ingredients in personal care, nutraceutical, pharmaceutical and bio-industrial products. Fytokem has applied for several scientific patents, and has developed a proprietary commercial scale manufacturing process.

**The TSX Venture Exchange has neither approved nor disapproved the information herein contained.**

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