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Tokyo: Japan's Asahi Kasei Chemicals and US-based SPI Pharma Inc. have agreed to form an alliance in the field of pharmaceutical additives. Beginning in January 2016, each company will sell the other's pharmaceutical additives in the respective markets of Japan and North America.

The pharmaceutical additives business of Asahi Kasei Chemicals is led by Ceolus microcrystalline cellulose (MCC) which features a superior balance of compactibility and flow in the tableting process. The product lineup includes specialty grades that enable soft (low-pressure) tableting and provide sufficient hardness with low addition rate, which are suitable for various challenging tablet formulations including orally disintegrating tablets (ODTs). Asahi Kasei Chemicals is expanding in global markets with specialty grades to further strengthen operations.

SPI Pharma is headquartered in the US and is a fully-owned subsidiary of Associated British Foods of the UK, with a product portfolio of functional excipients, antacid actives, vaccine adjuvants including Mannogem Mannitol for swallow tablets as well as chewable tablets and lozenges and Pharmaburst, a fully formulated drug delivery system for ODTs.

This business alliance will leverage the complementary products and sales channels of the two companies for mutual benefit. Asahi Kasei Chemicals will become the exclusive distributor in Japan for Mannogem and Pharmaburst while SPI Pharma will become the exclusive distributor in the US and Canada for specialty grades of Ceolus and Celphere MCC spherical seed cores for pharmaceutical applications.

In addition to developing markets by leveraging the complementary sales networks of Asahi Kasei Chemicals, with a leading position in Japan and Asia, and SPI Pharma, with strength in North America and Europe, the two companies will study the development of new products utilizing their respective technological strengths.

Through this alliance, both Asahi Kasei Chemicals and SPI Pharma will seek to make a greater contribution to drug development and reinforce their presence in the global healthcare market.