

"The industry can grow bigger than what it is now"

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- Steve Vadehra, VP, international operations, Kewaunee Scientific Corporation

What are Kewaunee's expansion plans in India?

Kewaunee has brought in world-class laboratory technology to India in 2000 and since then we have done about 50-60 projects in India. Before that there was no benchmark in the industry and people did not know what a true lab should look like. Now, there is that understanding in the market.

We started small and we didn't think at that time that India would be such a growth market for us in this area. But we are pleasantly surprised at the growth. We set up some manufacturing two years ago mainly for the domestic market. Later this year, we are looking to export some of the products manufactured here to the international market starting with South Asia.

The cost of lab equipment is a constraint to start-ups. What are your views on that?

I haven't seen the government giving any incentives or concessions on duties on equipment to companies that want to come in. So cost would definitely be one of the constraints for the growth of the industry.

What do you think about the growth track of the Indian biotech industry since you came here?

We have been in India for five years now and we have seen tremendous growth. We believe there is a lot of opportunity especially after the new patent law was passed. We will see more investments in this sector in India. What we have seen in India is that the industry is mostly driven by contract research. Majority of it has been in the chemical synthesis and research in the pharma area and biotech is still on the smaller side. But we believe that biotechnology has a bigger future.

A lot of Indian companies are scaling up and expanding and besides, a lot of companies abroad want to come to India. Growth is definitely there because it started from scratch. But it is still smaller compared what it could be. We believe that it is going to be much larger than what it is right now.

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