

## FACT SHEET



### **The history of Propolis:**

Propolis – Its Greek name pro (before) polis (City) is said to have been provided by Aristotle Alexander’s Philosopher, meaning ‘Defender of the City’, because it protects the hive and its bees from bacteria and infection but also because of its soothing and healing qualities for humans.

Man’s relationship with Propolis can be traced back to ancient Egypt, around 5,500 BC. Egyptians were said to have used it to soothe, heal and also to embalm the bodies of the great and good – to help them (so they thought) to return to life one day!

Three thousand years later, the Greeks are understood to have relied on Propolis to treat wounds and a variety of illnesses. Like the Pharaohs, the body of Alexander the Great was preserved with a mixture of liquid honey and Propolis. Alexander’s philosopher and tutor, was fascinated by the gifts from the hive. He made what is thought to be the first scientific study of bees and the role of the queen bee. He even built a glass hive to watch them, but the bees went on strike refusing to move until he had smeared the inside with dark sticky Propolis.

It was the Romans who furthered the commercial development of beekeeping and knowledge of Propolis. Roman soldiers carried it to war to heal their wounds or to use as a morale building tonic as they set out to conquer the world. The women used a Propolis cream to nurture their face and bodies; also for a range of feminine health problems. They named it “the woman’s friend”.

It was the 1990’s when the serious interest in Propolis began when a lot of publicity appeared with the general public talking about their experiences of using it to help treat a variety of health problems. Some GP’s reported how they prescribed it successfully for patients that modern medicines failed to help.

Propolis was then well and truly on the map!

### **When the bees get busy....**

In the Spring, when slender buds appear on trees and plants, Mother Nature steps in to protect them from harsh weather and the sun’s harmful rays. She covers them with a resinous substance to prevent free radical damage to the tissues.

The hives need similar protection from ultraviolet radiation, and bees solve this problem of survival by collecting these resins to make Propolis. They mix the resins with their own secretions to form the gum like Propolis – sometime referred to as Bee Glue.

They use it to seal every gap or hole in the hive, no matter how small to keep out light –and intruders seeking shelter and their food. Finally the bees polish it with their wings to give it a smooth surface fit for their Queen.

After her one and only mating, the Queen Bee lays thousands of eggs –each protected in a safe cradle of Propolis laid down by the bees.

### **The benefits of Propolis...**

It has been hailed as nature's antibiotic – and it has no side effects. Propolis is the wonder product for a whole range of ailments and for all round health.

### **What the Scientists say....**

Scientists say Propolis contains more than 150 components including a significant percentage of Flavonoids, regarded as responsible for many aspects of its therapeutic activity.

Dr Bent Havsteen, MD Formerly of Cornell University, USA and Kiel University Germany , says that bioflavonoids in Propolis have a protective effect on virus infection by keeping it inactive. It is, in his opinion, the same as being immune to the virus.

He adds that Propolis is also a prime source of histamine and serotonin, two substances that help the body cope with allergies.

Propolis he claims is very effective for dental problems, especially when inflammation and infectious bleeding weaken bone structure and cause tooth loss. It is said to stop the bleeding while the bioflavonoids stimulate enzyme formulation to fortify the walls of blood vessels in the gums.

### **Propolis usage around the world...**

In Asia and South America propolis can be found in most house holder's medicine cabinets and is the first product that they reach for as defence to any infections and ailments –both orally and topically.

### **The Propolis range....**

This consists of: capsules, tablets, lozenges, cream, throat spray and winter mixture.

