



Vitakraft Buys Sun Seed

New partnership will market both brands for pets including birds and small animals.

By BirdChannel News Division

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After a business relationship of nearly 20 years, Vitakraft Pet Products has acquired Sun Seed Co. The two businesses will be combined to form Vitakraft Sun Seed Co. and will operate from Sun Seed's Bowling Green, Ohio, headquarters under a joint management team. Most of Vitakraft's U.S. production will move to Bowling Green. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Andy Messinger, Vitakraft's U.S. general manager, will become chief executive officer of the new company and oversee administration, sales and marketing. Brent Weinmann, Sun Seed's owner and president, will be president of the new company, focusing on operations and product development. Weinmann's wife and Sun Seed co-owner Holly Hoffman will continue as marketing director.

The new company will actively market both the Sun Seed and Vitakraft brands in North America.

"This new partnership between Vitakraft and Sun Seed will offer the convenience of one-stop shopping for our customers and help us to control costs in this challenging economic environment," said Weinmann.

The merged company's product lines will include foods and treats for birds and small animals, including dog treats, horse treats and pond and reptile products.

Vitakraft Pet Products is the North American business of Vitakraft Wuehrmann und Sohn, a Bremen, Germany-based company founded in 1837. It recently launched Vita Life dog and cat food lines and "Pet's Corner," a store-within-a-store modular retail merchandising system, at Interzoo.

"Vitakraft is committed to the United States market, and this investment is a strong step in our strategy of growing Vitakraft's business throughout the world," said Heiko Wuehrmann, Vitakraft's chairman.