

## Pioneering Quality Standards for Canada's Natural Health Industry

**Dr. Paula Brown, Canada Research Chair, Phytoanalytics**

Ever wonder if that ginseng you're taking to prevent a cold is actually working? Are you getting the best product available? Dr. Paula Brown, Canada Research Chair in Phytoanalytics, is dedicated to finding the answers to critical questions like these. Dr. Brown focuses on improving the quality of standards of natural health products manufactured, prescribed, and consumed in Canada.

"The foundations of our research are to help ensure that Canadians can readily access both the potential health benefits and economic benefits afforded by medicinal plants," says Dr. Brown. "So whether you are talking about viable agricultural alternatives, specialty crop development, novel product development, or advanced therapeutics, we impact it from a health promotion and health protection standpoint, as well as from an economic development standpoint for the development of new and improved products. We help provide new opportunities at a producer level, not just a manufacturing commercialization level."

From the Ministry of Agriculture to Health Canada, Dr. Brown has worked with agencies across the country to standardize the approach taken when testing products for potency, strength, and efficacy. She sits on multiple boards and committees including the American Botanical Council, the Joint Committee for Dietary Supplements, and NSF International. She also collaborates with researchers at universities around the world to constantly find new ways to improve agricultural management practices, advance laboratory testing of products, support development of novel therapeutics, and effect policy in the regulation of natural health products (NHPs).

Dr. Brown's Canada Research Chair appointment has enabled her to recruit more students to help with her research. Mentoring and training students is important for Dr. Brown's growth as a scientist, and improves students' research skills so they can more readily solve industry problems.

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