



# Beyond Potential: The Realities and Future of Iran's Herbal Medicine & Medicinal Herb Sectors

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- Executive Summary: This report explores the burgeoning potential of Iran's herbal medicine and medicinal herb sectors. Fueled by robust research, cutting-edge infrastructure, and a relentless focus on innovation, Iran is poised to become a major player in the global herbal medicine market. We delve into Iran's key strengths, identifying specific areas primed for high growth. The report examines Iran's rich biodiversity, a cornerstone of its strong foundation within the global health industry.

Furthermore, we showcase prominent Iranian herbal medicine companies, empowering potential partners to capitalize on the remarkable opportunities within this dynamic landscape.







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# Introduction

ran, a nation steeped in history and cultural richness, boasts a burgeoning health industry poised for significant growth. This dynamic sector, embedded within a rapidly evolving economy, presents a compelling picture of potential and capability.

Standing at the crossroads of East and West, Iran leverages its unique position to combine a rich heritage of medical knowledge with cutting-edge advancements. This strategic location fosters a diverse talent pool and facilitates collaboration with both Eastern and Western partners. Furthermore, Iran's vast reserves of natural resources provide the foundation for a robust pharmaceutical industry, while its well-established scientific community fuels research and development efforts.

This report delves into the heart of Iran's healthcare potential, exploring the strengths and resources that position the country as a major player in the global market. We will meticulously analyze the factors that contribute to Iran's competitive edge, including its highly skilled medical professionals, advanced medical infrastructure, and commitment to innovation.

Specific areas within the healthcare sector with high growth potential will be identified, highlighting opportunities for domestic and international collaboration.

This in-depth analysis will serve as a valuable resource for businesses, policymakers, and investors seeking to explore the untapped potential of the Iranian healthcare market.

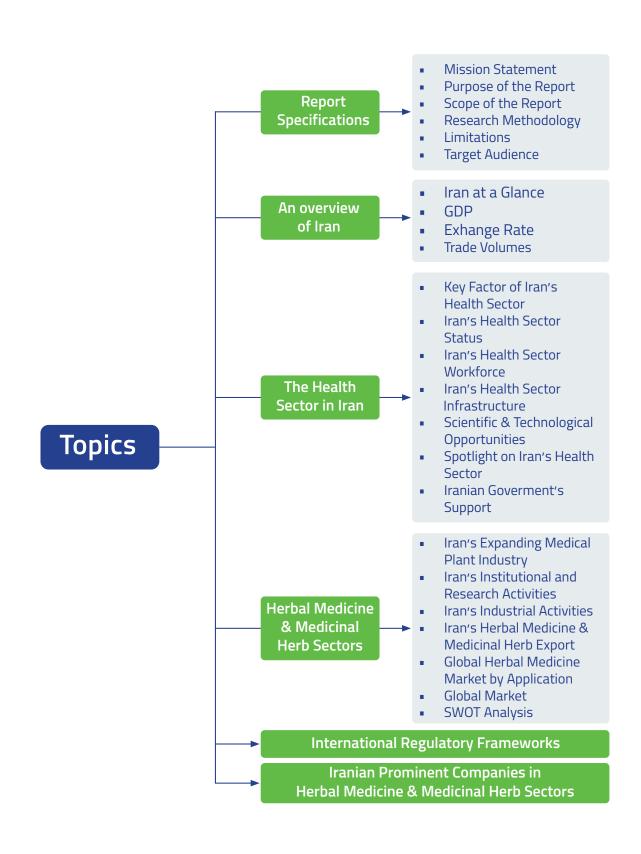
As we delve deeper, you will gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors shaping the future of healthcare trade and collaboration within this dynamic nation.

This report was prepared with the support of the promotion organization of Iran (TPO). The TPO stands as a pivotal force in fostering trade between Iran and other nations. Established in 1966, it carries the crucial mission of promoting and developing Iran's non-oil trade through a comprehensive set of initiatives. The TPO role extends far beyond simply being a mediator. It actively engages in various endeavors to cultivate a thriving trade environment.

Iran Expo Exhibition is one of the TPO plan to facilitate trading with Iran. Iran Expo is a global platform dedicated to showcasing the achievements and exceptional products of Iran, held in Tehran, serves as a bridge, connecting the world with the rich heritage and dynamic industries of this captivating nation.



# Structure of the Report



# Report Specifications

### Mission of the Report

Empowering Iran's Medicine and Healthcare industry for Global Excellence is the main mission of this report. This mission is driven by a commitment

- Access to critical market insights
- Direct Access to Potential Partners
- Establish Valuable and Strategic Connections
- Minimize trade Risks

### Purpose of the Report

The primary purpose of this report is to serve as a comprehensive resource for foreign businesses and investors interested in exploring export opportunities in Iran's Medicine and Healthcare industry. It aims to provide a holistic understanding of the sector current status, strengths, opportunities, challenges, and future prospects.

### Scope of the Report

The report encompasses a broad scope, covering various aspects of the Iranian Medicine and Healthcare industry export potential. It delves into the following key areas:

- **Key Export Products**
- The most Attractive Target Markets
- Trade Promotion and Investment Opportunities
- **Industry Challenges**

### Research Methodology

This report analyzes the export potential of Iran's Medicine and Healthcare industry for international traders. It employs a three-step approach:

Macroeconomic Analysis: Data on Iran's GDP, trade volume, and major trading partners was gathered from reputable sources such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and International Trade Center (ITC). This data was analyzed to draw a big picture of the overall economic landscape, highlighting market size, growth potential, and relevant consumer trends.

- Industry-Specific Research: Information on Iran's Medicine and Healthcare industry exports, key product categories, and major competitors was collected from specialized databases like Trade Map, FAOSTAT, and COMTRADE. Based on this data, specific Medicine and Healthcare industry segments with high export potential were identified for further study.
- Primary Data Collection & Company Profiling: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of prominent Iranian Medicine and Healthcare industry export companies within the chosen segments. Company Profiles were created for key players, highlighting their strengths, target markets, and export capabilities.

#### Limitations

It is important to acknowledge that this study has limitations. Access to certain primary data, particularly within specific industry segments, might be restricted due to market competitiveness or data availability. Additionally, the dynamic nature of the global economy and trade regulations necessitates continuous updates to maintain the report accuracy.

#### Target Audience

The report is primarily tailored to foreign businessmen and investors seeking opportunities to collaborate or invest in Iran's Medicine and Healthcare industry. It aims to cater to a diverse range of stakeholders, including:

- Medicine and Healthcare industry producers and processors
- Medicine and Healthcare industry technology
- Investment firms and financial institutions
- Consulting firms and advisors



# An Overview of Iran

#### Iran at a Glance

Area: 1,648,195 square kilometersPopulation: 88,860,005 people

Capital: Tehran

• Official religion: Islam

• Official language: Farsi (Persian)

Currency: Rial

Number of provinces: 31

Number of industrial parks: 824

Number of science & technology parks: 54

Number of technology incubators: 264

Number of high-tech companies: 9620

Number of industrial companies: 30400

Number of universities: 2183

Number of ports: 12

2023 GDP: 368 billion USD

The export volume in 2023: 81 billion USD

The import volume in 2023: 59 billion USD

ran boasts a rich history and a strategic location, fostering a dynamic and diverse economy. This report delves into the nation's flourishing industries, showcasing its vast potential for international collaboration and growth. With a skilled workforce and a strong entrepreneurial spirit, Iran is poised to play a significant role in the global marketplace. Iran's economy is underpinned by a robust mix of industries. This report explores the strengths of each sector. Iran possesses a strategic location and well-developed infrastructure, making it a key player in international trade. This report examines the country's trade landscape, showcasing the opportunities for foreign businesses to partner with Iranian companies and reach new markets.

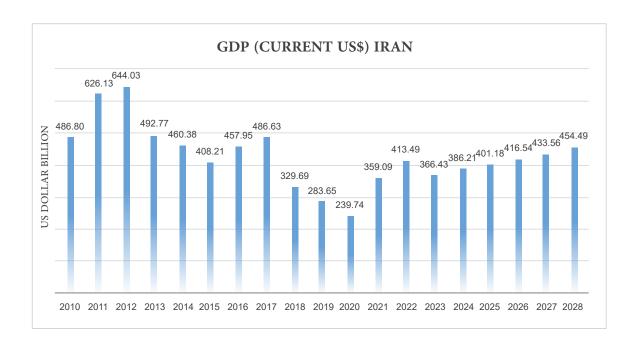
#### **GDP**

Exhibit 1 shows the GDP (current USD) of Iran from 2010 to 2028, with projections for 2023 to 2028. The GDP is a measure of the total value of goods and services produced within a country in a given period. The graph shows that the GDP of Iran has been growing steadily in recent years, with an average annual growth rate of around 2%.

In 2022, the GDP of Iran was estimated to be around 414 billion USD. Exhibit 1 shows the forecast for Iran's GDP growth between 2023 and 2028 is for modest growth, in the range of 2% to 3% per year. This means that the Iranian economy is expected to grow slowly but steadily over the next few years.

# Exhibit 1: GDP (USD) of Iran from 2010 to 2028

(Source: World Bank)



#### **Exchange Rate**

The Iranian Rial has weakened against the US dollar in recent years. This weaker exchange rate, meaning more rials are needed per dollar, can make Iranian exports cheaper on the global market.

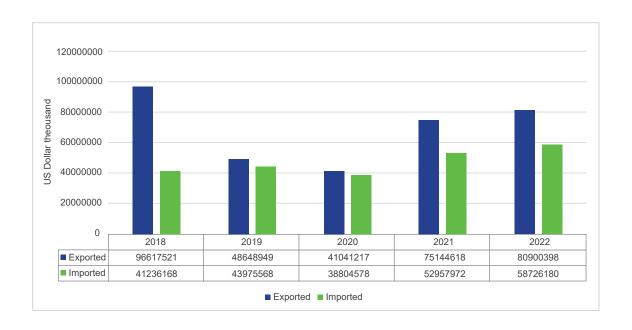
This could potentially lead to increased demand and production due to lower labor costs (in dollar terms) and a decrease in the unit cost of goods.

### **Trade Statistics**

Iran's overall import statistics have experienced an approximate growth of 40% during the last four years.

Iran's largest imports in 2022 are from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) accounting for 30.7%, followed by China at 26.5%, Turkey at 10.4%, and India at 4.6%.

# Exhibit 2: Value of Iran's Export and Import from 2018 to 2022 (Source: TRADE MAP)



Iran's overall export statistics are also going through an upward trend, especially in the last two years. Exports from 2020 to 2022 have grown by 100 percent. Iran's largest export in 2022 is to China with 27.7%.

The reason for the drop in exports in 2019 is the withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA signed by Donald Trump, the former president of this country, and the return of sanctions in 2018, which resulted in a significant drop in Iran's oil exports.

This trend reached its lowest level in 2020 regarding the impact of the Corona pandemic. After that and under the same conditions, Iran was able to increase its exports.

# Iran's Health Sector

he healthcare industry, as one of the important and vital areas in any society, plays a very important role in improving the quality of people's lives and economic development. Medical knowledge in Iran has a long history and has trained many skilled scientists and physicians throughout history who have had a profound impact on the advancement of human knowledge. In ancient times, great figures such as «Abu Ali Sina» and «Zakariya Razi» were born in this land.

In modern times, prominent figures such as «Professor Samii» (the world's best brain surgeon) and «Professor Professor Mussivand» (the Iranian Inventor of Artificial Cardiac Pump) have also been raised here.

### Key Factors of Iran's Health Sector

Iran's health sector is positioned for growth and international collaboration, fueled by a robust foundation of strengths.

This report explores these key advantages, highlighting the skilled workforce, commitment to self-sufficiency, and strategic government support that drive innovation and position Iran as a competitive player in the global health market. Among the strengths of Iran, the following can be mentioned:

- Human Capital: Iran boasts a large pool of highly trained medical professionals, including doctors, pharmacists, researchers, and scientists. This strong human capital base fuels innovation and research and development (R&D) in the health sector.
- Focus on Self-Sufficiency: Iran has prioritized self-sufficiency in healthcare, leading to the development of a robust domestic pharmaceutical industry capable of producing a wide range of essential and generic medications.
- Government Support: The Iranian government recognizes the importance of the health sector and invests in R&D initiatives, infrastructure development, and promoting domestic production of medical products.
- Competitive Advantage: Iranian medical products are often competitively priced due to lower production costs compared to some international counterparts.
- Growing Domestic Market: Iran's large and growing population creates a strong domestic market for pharmaceuticals and medical devices, fostering continuous development within the industry.



- Advancements in R&D: Iranian researchers and companies are actively engaged in R&D, developing innovative medical technologies and generic drugs.
- Focus Specialties: Iran on has established expertise in specific areas like biopharmaceuticals, herbal medicines, and Nano medicine.
- Patent Activity: The increasing number of patents registered by Iranian entities in the medical field demonstrates the country's growing technological capabilities.

The concluding part of this text emphasizes the bright future of Iran's health sector due to the strong foundation it possesses. However, simply stating the potential isn't enough. To truly showcase Iran's capabilities, we need to delve deeper.

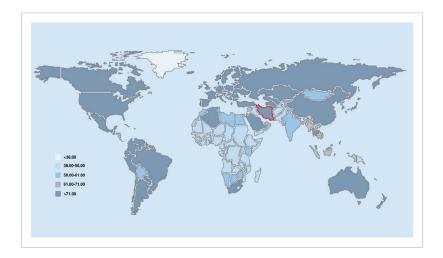
In the continuation of the report will examine specific examples within the health sector, providing concrete evidence to support the claims made about Iran's strengths and technological advancements. This will give a more comprehensive picture of what Iran has to offer in the global healthcare landscape.

#### Iran's Health Status

Exhibit 3 displays the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) effective coverage index for various countries worldwide. Iran presently offers over 70% of the essential and impactful health and treatment services.

This index aims to represent how well health services cover a population's needs and the impact these services have on improving overall health. It considers factors like Accessibility, Quality, and Affordability.

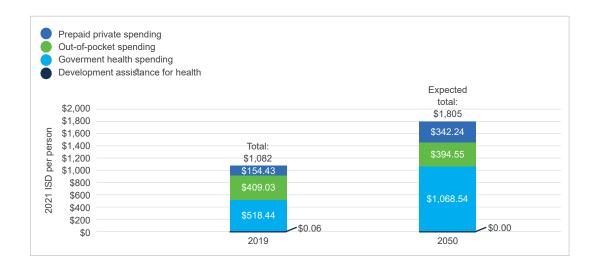
# **Exhibit 3:** Universal Health Coverage Illustration in 2021 (Source: IHME)



A report by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) predicts a dramatic shift in Iran's healthcare landscape by 2050.

Government health coverage is expected to more than double, exceeding 100% growth compared to 2019. This translates to a significant decrease in out-of-pocket expenses for citizens, with a projected 4% reduction.

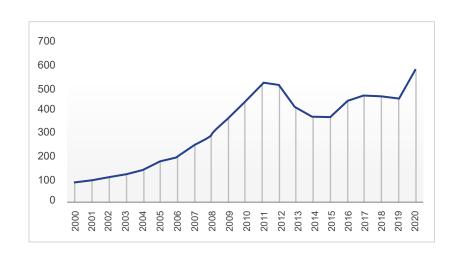
# Exhibit 4: Health Coverage in Iran (Source:IHME)



In 2020, according to the World bank report, Iran's health expenditure per capita reached 573 US dollars, reflecting a significant increase from 94 US dollars in 2001.

This translates to an average annual growth rate of 10.76%. This data highlights Iran's growing investment in healthcare, prioritizing the wellbeing of its citizens.

# Exhibit 5: Health Expenditure per Capita (current USD) in Iran (Source: World Bank)



#### Iran's Health Sector Workforce

- 311,121 Paramedical personnel 52,050 Physicians
  - 17,433 General practitioners
  - 4,683 Dentists
  - 304 PhDs in laboratory sciences
  - 2.623 Pharmacists
  - 17,967 Medical specialists
  - 2,553 Subspecialists
  - 6,497 PhDs in specialized fields

(Source: Statistical Center of Iran)

### Iran's Health Sector Infrastructure

Total number of hospitals: 1,020

Public hospitals: 705

Non-public hospitals: 315

Number of active comprehensive health service centers: 5.881

Number of active health bases: 5,535

Number of active health houses: 17,821

Number of medical diagnostic laboratories:

Number of genetic diagnostic laboratories: 128

Total number of active pharmacies: 13,052

Number of veterinary pharmacies: 2,330

Number of private veterinary clinics: 2,058

(Source: Statistical Center of Iran)

### Due ot Statista, in 2024:

- Estimated number of hospital beds per 1,000 inhabitants: 1.54
- Estimated number of beds per hospital: 131.10 (assuming even distribution across hospitals)
- Number of physicians: 52,050 (as per your previous translation)
- Number of nurses per 1,000 inhabitants: 2.03
- Number of dentists per 1,000 inhabitants: 0.54
- Number of physiotherapists per 100,000 inhabitants: 14.86

It's important to consider that these are estimates and may not reflect the exact situation in every region of Iran. The number of beds per hospital is an estimate based on the total number of beds and hospitals and may not be representative of every hospital.

# Scientific and Technological Potential and Opportunities in Iran

Iran boasts a strong position in medical science according to reputable international organizations. The country ranks 17th globally and 1st in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region for its overall medical knowledge. This accomplishment is further supported by Iran's 16th place in the world for publishing medical research. However, Iran's performance is even more impressive in specific medical fields. For instance, Iran ranks a remarkable 4th globally in infertility treatment, solidifying its leading position within the MENA region.

**Healthcare Research:** Over the past three years, 12 Iranian researchers in the field of health have had an h-index of over 40. This indicates a high level of research productivity in the Iranian healthcare sector.

Scientific Publications: There are currently 53 scientific and research journals in the fields of health and hygiene, 180 journals in the fields of medical sciences, 20 journals in the fields of pharmacy, and 14 journals in the fields of paramedical sciences that are approved by the Ministry of Science and Health. This shows a strong commitment to scientific publishing in the Iranian healthcare sector.

Education and Training: In the field of health sciences, there are numerous universities in Iran that offer admission, education, and training for students in various fields, including medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, paramedical sciences, nursing and midwifery, veterinary medicine, biology, rehabilitation and social health, and health and safety. A total of 67 universities and medical schools are active in Iran. This indicates a well-developed healthcare education system in the country.

Knowledge-Based Companies: The number of knowledge-based companies in Iran has reached 9620 by 2023, showing a 17% growth compared to the previous year. Of these, more than 1600 companies operate in the healthcare sector. 30% of knowledge-based companies in the healthcare sector are active in the field of pharmaceutical raw materials, and 24% are involved in the production of medical equipment. This demonstrates the growing importance of the healthcare sector in Iran's knowledge-based economy.

Science and Technology Parks: There are 13 science and technology parks and 95 technology incubator centers in the field of health. This shows a strong infrastructure for innovation and technology transfer in the Iranian healthcare sector.

Licensed Products and Patented Inventions: Iranian scientists and companies are making significant strides in healthcare innovation, as evidenced by the impressive number of patents they've secured – nearly 180 – with the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) and the European Patent Office (EPO).

This surge in intellectual property protection reflects a broad range of advancements across various healthcare fields including Pharmaceuticals (81 patents), Medical Equipment (162 Patents), Biotechnology (27 Patents), Herbal Plants and Medicine (9 patents).

This surge in innovation signifies several positive developments:

- **Scientific Prowess:** The high number of patents demonstrates the strength of Iranian scientific research and development in the healthcare sector.
- Global Recognition: Securing patents in prestigious international offices like USPTO and EPO highlights the global significance of Iranian healthcare advancements.
- **Economic Potential:** These patents have the potential to attract foreign investment, foster the growth of Iranian healthcare companies, and create new jobs within the sector.
- Improved Healthcare: Ultimately, innovations offer the potential to improve the quality of healthcare available not only in Iran but potentially worldwide

### Spotlight on Iran's Health Sector

**Cell Therapy:** Iran has been utilizing cell therapy for nearly two decades, placing it among the top 10 countries to implement this technology. While many nations are still in the research phase, Iran has successfully applied stem cells in various transplants, including cornea, heart, and skin.

**Infertility Treatment:** Iran stands out as a leading and highly capable nation in assisted reproductive technologies. Royan Infertility Clinic holds the distinction of being Iran's most reputable and wellequipped center for infertility treatment.

Royan not only provides services through specialized centers for infertility, cell therapy, and diabetes, but also actively engages in research through dedicated institutes focused on reproductive sciences, cell and stem cell biology, and biotechnology.

Biotechnology: Iran is now one of the top three producers of biotechnological products in the world. The country produces vaccines for hepatitis B, erythropoietin, interferon, streptokinase, GCSF, and interferon beta.

Largest Anti-Cancer Drug Production Plant in the Middle East: The Actoverco pharmaceutical group has launched nine production lines for anti-cancer drugs with an investment of over 100 million euros. This is the first German-American bioreactor in the Middle East with OFAC and BAFA licenses.

All products from these production lines are evaluated and controlled Actoverco's advanced quality control laboratories. These laboratories are equipped with the latest and most accurate analytical equipment, including 16 HPLC devices, seven UV and IR spectrophotometers, four TOC devices, and three GC devices.

Iran's Pharmaceutical Production: Iran ranks first in pharmaceutical production in the region. 97% of the country's needed medicines are produced domestically. Iran is now the fourth producer of recombinant drugs in Asia. So far, 14 such drugs have been produced in the country. Recombinant drugs are mainly used in the treatment of incurable diseases such as cancers, some viral diseases, multiple sclerosis, and hemophilia.

Medical Equipment: Iran has made significant strides in the development and production of medical equipment in recent years. This progress is driven by a combination of factors, including government investment, a growing knowledgebased economy, and the dedication of researchers and entrepreneurs. Iran has successfully produced image processing equipment for CT scan devices, a vital component for accurate medical imaging.

Medical Plants: Leaning on its rich history of herbal medicine, Iran is experiencing a resurgence in this field. The establishment of refineries for processing medicinal plants alongside the development of innovative extraction methods, like the tripling of rose essence yield, showcases this commitment. Furthermore, Al-powered machines are being built to improve the efficiency and quality of harvesting valuable saffron. This surge in research and development, coupled with the vast array of native medicinal plants in Iran, positions the country as a potential leader in the revitalization of traditional medicine.

Health Tourism: Leveraging its long history of medical excellence and world-class facilities, Iran's health tourism sector is booming. With 247 licensed medical centers catering to over 1.2 million medical tourists from 164 countries in 2023 alone, Iran has secured its place as a leading destination (ranking 46th globally). The recent establishment of two herbal refineries in Razavi Khorasan Province further strengthens this position by providing innovative treatment options, attracting even more international patients seeking high-quality healthcare.

Additional Areas of Focus: Iran is actively researching and developing cutting-edge solutions in areas like nanomedicine, advanced medical imaging, telemedicine, gene therapy, and tissue engineering. These advancements have the potential to revolutionize healthcare delivery, disease detection, and treatment options in Iran and beyond.

# Iranian Government's Support for the Health Sector

The Iranian government has implemented a multi-faceted approach to support the growth and innovation of the domestic health industry.

A significant 52% increase in healthcare funding for the Ministry of Health and affiliated organizations was allocated in the 2023 budget. The government prioritizes strengthening infrastructure for the production of high-quality pharmaceuticals, vaccines, medical supplies, and equipment that meet international standards.

This focus aims to reduce reliance on imported medical products and potentially make healthcare more affordable. A specific support package has been developed to incentivize domestic production of medicines and health products. This initiative aims to reduce dependence on foreign imports and potentially lower healthcare costs for the population.

Recognizing the potential of the Iranian health industry, the government provides direct financial support to manufacturing companies to participate in and visit international health exhibitions. This initiative enhances visibility for Iranian healthcare products in the global market and potentially opens doors for export opportunities.

# Iran's Herbal Medicine and Medicinal Herb Sectors

he traditional knowledge of medicine and pharmacy in Iran is an amalgamation of the prehistoric beliefs and practices of early inhabitants of the Mesopotamian plains, plus that of the later Babylonians, Assyrians, Elamites, and other ancient civilizations.

The Jundishapur academic center in ancient Persia, due to its cosmopolitan nature, could be defined as one of the earliest universities in the world. Sabur (or Shapur) Sahl, a well-known pharmacist of this institution, composed his Aqraba-din-e-Kabir (great pharmacopeia) in 869 CE, which became the first pharmacopeia to receive widespread acceptance. The first book on pharmacology in the Persian language was written about 975 CE by Abu-Mansur Heravi. Al-Tabari (circa 818-870 CE) and then Zakariya Razi (Rhazes in Latin) (865-925 CE) are among the pioneers of traditional Iranian medicine.

Razi's book (Al-Hawi fi Tibb) was among the 9 books employed by the Paris Faculty of Medicine in 1395. A long time after the scientific Renaissance in Europe, the two volumes of Razi's encyclopedia were the main sources of pharmacology.

ibn Sina (Avicenna in Latin) (980-1037 CE) was known in Europe as "The Prince of Physicians." Ibn Sina mentioned about 900 drugs, mostly herbal, in these 2 volumes of his book (The Canon of Medicine). Ibn Sina occupies a prominent place among the European scholars and philosophers who indirectly translated his works into Latin.

# Iran's Expanding Medicinal Plant Industry

Iran's Ministry of Agriculture reports a thriving medicinal plant industry. Over 260,000 hectares are currently dedicated to cultivating diverse medicinal plants, yielding more than 400,000 tons annually. Rainfed lands saw a significant boost in 2022 with 18,000 hectares allocated for medicinal plants.

Plans are underway to cultivate an additional 50,000 hectares of these plants, including rosehip, green cumin, and licorice, on rainfed land. So far, 8,000 hectares have been successfully cultivated. The focus on irrigated cultivation is also strong, with a target of 10,000 hectares, of which 6,000 have already been planted.



Iran boasts a diverse range of medicinal plants, with saffron, rosehip, borage, henna, coriander, green cumin, black cumin, and shallot leading the pack. Rosehip takes the crown for volume, while saffron reigns supreme in terms of value.

Iran's specific geographical position and variable climates make it unique in the world with its diverse climatic conditions. Among its 12 different geographic environments, Iran is divided into 5 major climates including Mediterranean, Desert and Half-desert, Warm-Humid, Warm-Dry, and Mountainous.

Iran is a country blessed with a high rank in plant biodiversity. Iran's wealth of medicinal plants is truly remarkable. With an estimated 8,000 species, its diversity is more than double what's found across Europe. Over 2,300 plant species in Iran possess valuable medicinal and aromatic properties, offering immense potential for use in spices and cosmetics.

#### Iran's Institutional and Research Activities

The most important educational activities in herbal medicine are related to faculties (colleges) of pharmacy. There are 27 Faculties of Pharmacy in different provinces of Iran. All of these colleges have a Department of Pharmacognosy (the study of drugs of natural origin, usually with an emphasis on plant-derived drugs).

Iran's commitment to herbal medicine is flourishing. Universities are brimming with students - over 5,600 are currently enrolled in medicinal plant programs. This surge in education fuels innovation: 87 dedicated research labs are actively exploring the potential of these plants.

There are some research centers on herbal medicine in Iran. The broad range of investigation carried out in these centers includes phytochemical, pharmacological, and clinical studies on medicinal plants. Also, there are some medical institutes such as the Iranian Cancer Institute, the Research Institute on Gastroenterology, and others that are concerned in part with research on medicinal plants.

Iranian scientists and companies have registered 9 patents in the field of herbal medicine in the European and US patent offices. The impact extends beyond academia. 58 clinics, public and private, offer traditional medicine solutions to patients. Additionally, 110 science and technology centers focus on developing new herbal products, ensuring this ancient knowledge thrives in the modern world.

For the development, education, and research of the medicinal plant industry, the Herbal Medicine Research Network was established in 2003 in the office of the Deputy of Research and Technology at the Ministry of Health and Medical Education.

Traditional knowledge isn't forgotten either. Over 2,200 historical medical texts have been revived through revision and republication. This, combined with Iran's impressive output of over 1,300 research papers in the last decade, has secured them the 6th spot globally for traditional medicine research. Iran's herbal medicine industry is flourishing. Production soared to 275,000 tons in 2023, solidifying their position as a leader in natural healthcare. A staggering 1,728 species of medicinal plants are native to Iran, thriving nowhere else on Earth. These exclusive plants represent a treasure trove of potential for future medicines and solidify Iran's position as a leader in natural healthcare.

The Iranian Food and Drug Administration reports that by 2023, nearly 1,000 herbal medicines and over 3,600 natural products were registered.

Products that are formulated based on valid traditional medicine references and books are classified as traditional, and herbal products that have foreign equivalents or valid clinical studies are considered natural products.

Iran's commitment is evident with over 4,700 business licenses issued for natural products and herbal medicines. This thriving sector boasts nearly 800 manufacturers, including 391 for natural products and 400 for supplements. Over 230 knowledge-based companies are dedicated to developing herbal medicine and medicinal plants.

Additionally, more than 300 innovative companies are pushing the boundaries in herbal medicines, natural products, and traditional remedies.

Two medicinal plants refineries are already operational in Razavi Khorasan province, with three more on the horizon in other cities. This commitment to infrastructure positions Iran for continued growth.



# Iran's Herbal Medicine and Medicinal **Herb Export**

The official export value of Iranian medicinal plants and herbal products has surpassed 660 million USD. The high diversity of medicinal plants in Iran has spurred traders to aim for exporting these products. Iran's high diversity of medicinal plants has attracted traders seeking to export these products.

According to a report by the Iranian Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade, a specific list of 15 plants has been identified as priority species for export by the Iranian government. This prioritization aims to ensure the preservation of other species and limit the exploitation of wild resources.

The criteria used to shortlist these species were climate, market opportunity, and the benefits the plants offer to culture and society. The following are the priority plants for export:

Exhibit 6 illustrates Iran's medicinal herb and plant exports are flourishing, with the United Arab Emirates leading the pack as the biggest importer at a potential value of 93 million USD.

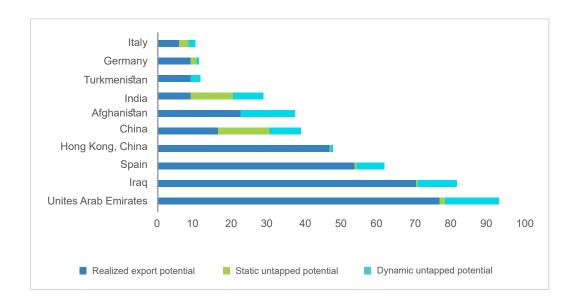
Hot on their heels are Iraq and Spain, offering export opportunities of 82 million USD and 62 million USD respectively. Interestingly, all three of these top destinations possess significant untapped potential, with an additional 14 million USD, 11 million USD, and 8 million USD waiting to be realized in the UAE, Iraq, and Spain.

Another promising market with substantial untapped potential is Afghanistan, presenting a 14 million USD opportunity.



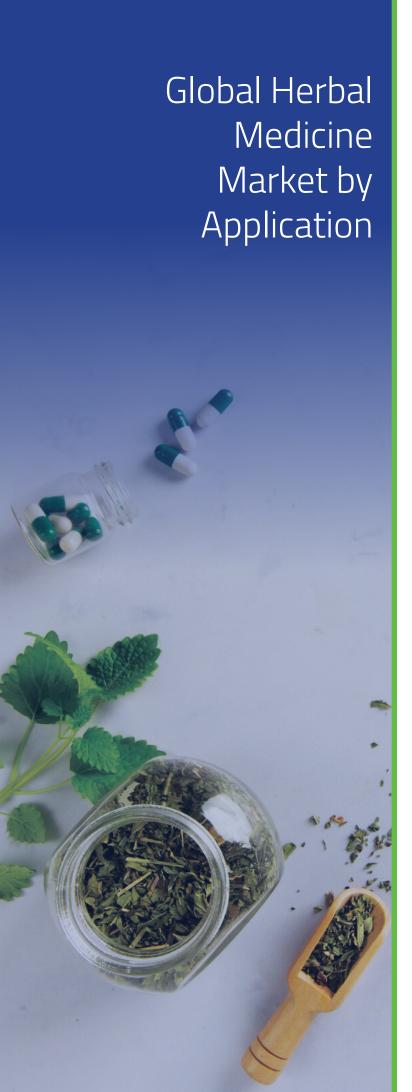


# Exhibit 6: Iran's Top 10 Destination Markets for Medicinal Herbs (Source: ITC)



While the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, and Spain dominate current exports, China and India hold the greatest potential for future growth in Iranian medicinal herbs and plants.

Although their total export potential currently sits at 37 million USD each, a significant portion remains unrealized. In fact, the untapped export potential reaches a staggering 22 million USD and 20 million USD in China and India respectively.



The global herbal medicine market can be segmented into distinct categories based on their primary application. Analyzing these segments provides valuable insights for manufacturers, investors, and researchers within the industry.

#### Pharmaceutical & Nutraceutical Applications:

This segment represents the largest application area for herbal medicines. It encompasses a wide range of products, including:

- **Dietary Supplements:** These are concentrated forms of vitamins, minerals, herbs, or other nutritional ingredients designed to supplement a regular diet. Examples include echinacea for immune support and turmeric for its antiinflammatory properties.
- Prescription Herbal Medicines: These are standardized herbal products that undergo rigorous clinical trials and receive regulatory body approval for specific health conditions.
- **Botanical Drugs:** Highly purified herbal extracts with proven medicinal properties are used in the development of pharmaceutical drugs, falling under this application segment.

# Food & Beverage Applications:

This segment is experiencing significant growth due to the rising consumer demand for natural and functional food and beverage options. Key applications include:

- Herbal Teas: Popular for their health benefits and calming properties, examples include chamomile for relaxation or ginger for nausea relief.
- Functional Foods: These products are enriched with herbal ingredients that offer specific health benefits, such as yogurt fortified with probiotics or energy drinks containing adaptogenic herbs.
- Fortified Food and Beverages: This application involves infusing products with herbal extracts to enhance their nutritional value, like cereals with green tea extract or sports drinks containing electrolytes and herbs.



#### Personal Care & Beauty Products Applications:

This segment utilizes herbal ingredients for their cosmetic and therapeutic properties. Common applications include:

- **Skin Care Products:** These may contain herbs like aloe vera for soothing sunburns or green tea for its antioxidant benefits.
- Hair Care Products: Hair products may utilize herbal extracts like rosemary oil to promote hair growth or chamomile to soothe scalp irritation.
- Cosmetics: Natural pigments and essential oils derived from herbs are increasingly used in makeup and other cosmetic products.

The global market for Over-The-Counter (OTC) herbal medicines and traditional medicines can be divided into two main categories:

- OTC Herbal Medicines: These are nonprescription, plant-based products readily available for purchase without a doctor's visit. They-re often chosen because of the belief in their natural healing properties, such as echinacea for colds or chamomile for relaxation.
- Traditional Medicines: This category encompasses a wider range of practices and remedies passed down through generations. Rooted in cultural and historical knowledge, traditional medicines may include herbal ingredients alongside minerals or even animal-based products. Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is a well-known example.

#### Global Market

According to a report by Coherent Market Insights, the global traditional medicine market reached a value of USD 174.89 billion in 2023. This market is projected to surge to a staggering USD 289.66 billion by 2031, reflecting a healthy Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 7.5% from 2024 to 2031.

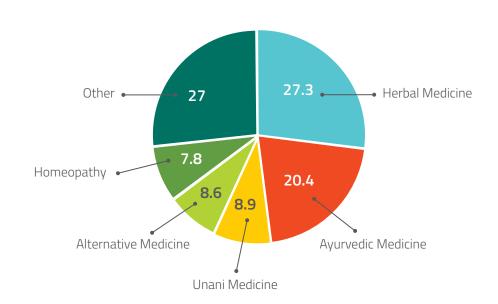
Diving deeper, the report reveals that herbal medicine reigns supreme as the most popular type of traditional medicine globally. In 2023, it captured a significant 27.3% share of the market. Here's a breakdown of the market share by product in 2023:

According to a report by Business Research Insights, the global market size for OTC herbal and traditional medicines was valued at 138.46 billion USD in 2021. This market is projected to reach 189.57 billion USD by 2027, growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 5.38% during the forecast period.

The herbal medicine market is flourishing, fueled by a growing desire for natural and alternative healthcare solutions. This trend shows no signs of slowing down, with projections for continued significant growth.

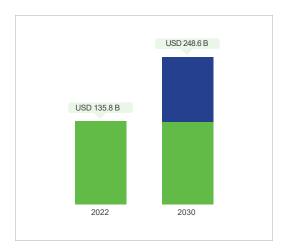
According to a 2023 report by Research and Markets, the global herbal medicine market reached an estimated 135.8 billion USD in 2022. This market is expected to reach a staggering 248.6 billion USD by 2030, reflecting a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 7.9% over the analysis period (2022-2030).

# **Exhibit 7:** Global Traditional Medicine Market Share (%) by Product in 2023 (Source: Coherent Market Insights)



# Exhibit 8: Global Herbal Medicine Market

(Source: Research and Markets)



According to the World Health Organization (WHO), a staggering 80% of the world's population turns to traditional health practitioners for plant-based medicines.

This widespread usage stems from the belief that natural products are inherently safe and free of side effects. Interestingly, even in developed countries, 10-50% of the population regularly uses some form of herbal medicine, highlighting its growing popularity across the globe.

The Asia-Pacific Herbal Medicine Market is expected to grow at the fastest CAGR from 2023 to 2032.



### Emerging markets in developing countries:

Emerging markets in developing countries present a great opportunity for growth in the global traditional medicine market. The developing countries continue their economic growth and development agendas, healthcare infrastructure and priorities are also improving.

# Synergies with pharmaceutical products:

Partnering with pharmaceutical companies allows traditional medicine practitioners to leverage advanced research and development capabilities.

### Growing geriatric population:

The growing geriatric population worldwide presents a major opportunity for the global traditional medicine market. According to World Health Organization (WHO), in 2022, the number of people aged 65 years and above is expected to grow from 727 million in 2020 to 1.5 billion in 2050 globally.

### Increasing investments in R&D of traditional medicine:

Increasing investments in research and development of traditional medicine is significantly contributing to the growth of the global traditional medicine market. Governments across major economies are focusing on promoting research in traditional therapies and integrating them with conventional systems.

# **Unexplored Potential:**

Traditional medicine from various cultures holds a wealth of untapped potential. Opportunities lie in researching, validating, and developing these practices into safe and effective products for a global audience.

# **Rising Demand for Natural Products:**

Consumers are increasingly seeking natural alternatives to conventional medicine. This shift in preference creates a prime opportunity for companies offering herbal remedies and traditional treatments with proven efficacy and safety.

# **SWOT Analysis**



# Strengths

- **Rich Biodiversity:** Iran is a treasure trove of medicinal plants, with over 1,700 native species. This unique botanical bounty provides a vast resource for developing novel and effective herbal medicines.
- Long History of Traditional Medicine: Iran has a rich heritage in traditional medicine practices dating back centuries. accumulated knowledge This experience provide a valuable foundation for the development of new herbal remedies.
- **Government Support:** The government actively supports the growth of the herbal medicine and medicinal herb
- Competitive Production Costs: Iran benefits from relatively lower production costs compared to some other major players in the herbal medicine market. This can make Iranian products more pricecompetitive on a global scale.
- **Growing Global Demand:** The global market for herbal medicines and natural healthcare products is experiencing significant growth, creating a favorable environment for Iranian exports.
- Research Development (R&D) **Focus:** Increased investment in research institutions and collaborations with universities to explore the medicinal properties of native plants and develop evidence-based herbal remedies.
- Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Hubs: Establishing innovation hubs or research centers specifically focused on herbal medicine to facilitate collaboration between researchers, practitioners, and businesses.



# Weaknesses

- Limited Investment in Research and **Development:** The current level of R&D investment in the sector may not be sufficient to fully explore the potential of Iran's vast plant biodiversity.
- Limited Integration with Modern Medicine: There is often a gap between traditional medicine practices and modern evidence-based medicine. Bridging this gap is crucial for developing herbal remedies that meet international scientific standards and are readily accepted by mainstream healthcare providers.
- Limited Brand Recognition and Marketing Strategies: Iranian herbal medicines may lack strong recognition and effective marketing strategies compared to established players in the global market. This can make it challenging to compete effectively and capture a larger market share.
- **Processing** Outdated Facilities: Reliance on outdated processing facilities may compromise product quality and consistency, particularly for export markets with stringent regulations. Investment in modern infrastructure is needed to ensure products meet international standards.
- **Sustainable Cultivation Practices: While** some efforts may exist, a lack of widespread adoption of sustainable cultivation practices can lead to environmental degradation and depletion of valuable plant resources.



# Opportunities

- **Expanding Export Markets:** The global demand for herbal medicines and natural healthcare products is surging, presenting a substantial opportunity for Iranian exports.
- Rising Consumer Interest in Natural **Products:** Consumers worldwide are increasingly drawn to natural and organic products.
- Integration with Traditional Medicine **Systems:** There's growing interest in integrating traditional medicine practices with modern medicine. Iran's rich history in traditional medicine positions it well to develop evidence-based herbal remedies complement conventional that can treatments.
- **Development of Novel Products:** The vast biodiversity of Iranian medicinal plants offers a treasure trove for developing new and innovative herbal products.
- Investment Processing in and **Infrastructure:** Increased investment in modern processing facilities and infrastructure can improve product quality, consistency, and shelf life, making Iranian herbal medicines more attractive to international markets.
- Medical Tourism: Iran could explore developing medical tourism opportunities focused on traditional medicine practices and herbal remedies, attracting healthconscious travelers seeking alternative wellness solutions.
- **Joint Ventures:** Exploring joint ventures with foreign companies can leverage their expertise in areas like marketing, distribution, and regulatory compliance, boosting global reach and market penetration.

resources.

# **Threats**

- Competition from Established Players: The global market for herbal medicines is already crowded with established players who have strong brand recognition, welldeveloped distribution networks, and significant research and development
- Stringent Regulatory Requirements: International regulatory requirements for herbal medicines can be complex and costly to meet. Iran may face challenges in ensuring its products comply with these regulations, particularly in key markets with strict standards.
- Counterfeiting **Product** and **Authenticity:** The growing popularity of herbal medicines can attract counterfeiters who may offer low-quality or adulterated products. This can damage consumer trust and undermine the reputation of Iranian herbal medicines.
- Fluctuations in Raw Material Supply: Reliance on wild-crafted medicinal plants can lead to supply chain disruptions due to factors like climate change, overharvesting, or seasonal variations.

# International Regulatory Frameworks

his report explores various standards and practices that are crucial for the herbal medicine sector to ensure quality products and responsible operations.

### Quality Management Systems (QMS):

 ISO 9001: Quality Management Systems -Fundamentals:

This internationally recognized standard outlines the core principles of quality management. It applies a «process approach» emphasizing continuous improvement and interaction between different processes within an organization. While relevant to all industries, ISO 9001 is particularly valuable for the pharmaceutical industry by promoting consistent product quality and adherence to strict quality control measures.

 ISO 13485: Quality Management Systems for Medical Devices (Not included in your original text, but relevant for completeness):

This specific standard builds upon ISO 9001 and provides additional requirements for the quality management of medical devices. It emphasizes risk management and regulatory compliance for a safe and effective medical device lifecycle.

# **Environmental Management:**

 ISO 14001: Environmental Management Systems (EMS):

This standard guides organizations in designing and implementing an EMS to minimize their environmental impact and improve sustainability. By adhering to ISO 14001, pharmaceutical companies can demonstrate their commitment to responsible waste management, resource usage, and environmental protection.

### Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S):

ISO 45001: Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems:

This standard outlines the requirements for an OH&S management system. It helps organizations identify and manage workplace hazards, minimize risks, and continuously improve worker safety and well-being.



#### Testing and Calibration:

# ISO/IEC 17025: General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories:

This standard ensures the competence, impartiality, and consistent operation of testing and calibration laboratories. By adhering to ISO/IEC 17025, pharmaceutical companies can guarantee the accuracy and reliability of their testing results, a critical aspect of product quality control.

#### Other Relevant Standards and Practices:

### ISO 10668: 2010: Brand valuation:

While not directly related to product quality, this standard can be helpful for pharmaceutical companies in understanding and valuing their brand reputation.

# ISO 10015: 2019: Quality Management -Guidelines for competence management and people development:

This standard provides guidance on establishing training and development programs to ensure employees have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their jobs effectively, contributing to overall quality.

# **Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP):**

This is a regulatory framework defining quality and production standards for pharmaceuticals. It ensures consistent production, rigorous quality control measures, and proper documentation throughout the manufacturing process.

#### Additional Considerations:

#### ISO 14001 Clarification:

The report contains a duplicate description of ISO 14001. The first instance accurately describes its purpose.

#### ISO/TS 10004, ISO 10002, ISO 22716:

While these standards are relevant in specific contexts, they are not essential for this general overview of quality and management systems in the pharmaceutical industry.

# 5S Methodology:

While not an ISO standard, 5S is a housekeeping and waste control method that can be a valuable tool in maintaining a clean and organized work environment, potentially contributing to improved quality and efficiency.

# Some Iranian Prominent Companies in Herbal Medicine & Medicinal Herb Sectors

# Barij Essence Pharmaceutical Company

#### **Brief Overview**

Barij Essential Pharmaceutical Company is a manufacturer of herbal medicines and the first pharmaceutical knowledge-based company in the country. This company was established in 1992 with the aim of creating specialized drugs and advanced research on medicinal plants and herbal medicines with a focus on producing a higher quality product and also using and emphasizing the consumption of native Iranian plants and reviving traditional Iranian medicine.

### Products/Services

Barij Essence Pharmaceutical Company products are divided into 13 main groups including: Analgesic and Musculoskeletal, Gastrointestinal System, Glands and Cardiovascular System, Gynecology and Obstetrics, kids, Neurology and Psychiatry, Otolaryngology, Respiratory System, Skin and Hair, Strengthening Sexual Powers, Tonic and Appetizer, Urology, Weight Loss

# Industrial achievements and awards and Export

- Barij Essential Research and Development sections are: Agriculture, Plant Protection, Formulation, Phytochemistry, Instrumental Analysis, Development and Coordination of Scientific Texts, Regulatory, Veterinary, Microbiology and Biotechnology. The sector activity resulted in the design of about 200 pharmaceutical products: tablets, hard capsules, soft capsules, drops, syrups, creams, ointments, gels, pastes, suppositories, and sachets.
- Export to countries such as Tajikistan, Georgia, China and Canada
- Winner of the Grand Prix of five continents for quality and brand excellence from the French Quality Association in 2013
- Received the GOM Award from Switzerland in 1997
- Received GMP certification from the Ministry of Health and Medical Education in 2006
- Selected as the best entrepreneur in the country in 2006

### Certificates & Standards

- ISO 9001: 2015 certification
- ISO 14001: 2015 certification
- ISO 45001: 2018 certification
- Laboratory certification certificate
- IMS Integrated Management System Certification
- GMP2016 certification from Canada August 2016





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# Khorraman Pharmaceutical Company

### **Brief Overview**

Khorraman Pharmaceutical Company, with a history of more than 20 years of continuous production and service to the community, has the mission as a knowledge-based company to create, strengthen, and promote public awareness in the field of herbal medicines, as well as increasing the quality and quantity of research.

Community health steps. Khorraman Group is proud to increase the quality of its products day by day in order to achieve public health and by spending a lot of time and money in the field of R&D as well as customer needs assessment, and this is certainly without valuable human investments, experienced and efficient managers and personnel. Compassion will not be possible. The support and guidance of the respected medical community and dear consumers will help us to achieve these goals.

# **Products/Services**

The Company products are divided into 13 main groups including:

- Mouth and tooth: periodentol safe toothpaste, Aphtoplex, Dentolplus, Endodentol, Mucodentol, Dentol drop
- Skin and hair: Myrtonic, Myrtol, Belpharol lotion, Myrtoderm ointment
- Women diseases: Mirtolea
- Hemorrhoids: Rectol
- Disinfectants: carvasept
- Health-oriented: Saturex medicinal tea

### **Certificates & Standards**

- ISO 9001:2015
- laboratory accreditation certificate: ISIRI-ISO/IEC 17025





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# **Tabiat Zendeh Laboratories (Cinere)**

#### **Brief Overview**

Founded in 1997, Tabiat Zendeh Laboratories has been producing high quality and natural-based cosmetic products to satisfy customer's needs for hair & skin care. Tabiat Zendeh Laboratories introduced its products to the market under the name "Cinere", "Zardband", "Inlay", "DermaClean", "SupplusMeds" with recruiting specialists and continuous efforts, we were awarded the best brand of the year in 2009.

Cinere is endorsed by doctors and specialists and at domestic and international scientific summits, including British Association of Dermatologists.

#### **Products/Services**

- Organic-based cosmetic products for hair and skin care.
- Producing and supplying medicinal herbs through valid international resources and seeds of different species.
- Detergents made from a variety of extracts and organic oils.
- Food supplements, made from the purest and the most high quality materials, including vitamins and medicinal herbs.

### Industrial achievements and awards and Export

- Awarded for the top brand and quality
- Awarded for the best PR in brand development by ECOIT
- Presenting numerous scientific publications and cooperating with experts and scientists inside and outside the country, with the goal of promoting activities and supporting researchers, are among Tabiat Zendeh Laboratories achievements. The company's overseas activities are also noticeable and increasing.

#### **Certificates & Standards**

- ISO 10668:2010 Brand Valuation
- ISO 10004:2010 standard for quality management and customer satisfaction
- Placed in the first rank in cosmetic products quality awards by the IFDA
- GMP ISO 22716 by the TUVNORD
- ISO 9001:2015
- ISO 10015
- ISO14001:2015
- OHSAS18001:2007





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# Iran Darouk Pharmaceutical Company

### **Brief Overview**

Iran Darouk Pharmaceutical-Cosmetic Company is one of the largest and most advanced centers for the production of scientific and industrial herbal medicines in Iran and it has been operating since 1981 with the aim of preparing different pharmaceutical dosage forms according to the international standards and in accordance with GMP principles.

Iran Darouk has planned its goals to achieve this crucial aim and put the production of new herbal medicines and nutritional supplements at the top of its priorities.

### **Products/Services**

During the years of the company activity, it has been able to achieve a wide range of herbal medicine products and produced more than 100 types of formulations, with different dosage forms such as tablet, drop, syrup, solution, inhalation, sachet, cream, ointment and gel in the field of gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, respiratory, nervous system, urogenital, energy enhancer, diabetes, musculoskeletal and skin care and presented them on the market.

### **Certificates & Standards**

Establishment of the quality management system (ISO 9001: 2015) as well as the safety, health and environmental system (ISO 14001: 2015) and (ISO 45001: 2018)





# Goldaru Herbal Pharmaceutical Company

### **Brief Overview**

Goldaru Herbal Pharmaceutical Company was established in Isfahan in 1983 in order to revive traditional medicine and scientific herbal medicine. Initially, it started its production by processing and packaging medicinal plants and standard dry herbal medicines. After many years of efforts, this company managed to produce herbal medicines as drops in 1990.

### Products/Services

Goldaru Company currently produces 109 pharmaceutical products in the field of Brain and Neurology, Gynaecology, Internal, Gastrointestinal and Cardiovascular, Otorhinolaryngology, Pediatrics, Respiratory diseases, Sexual products, Skeletal and Muscular Pains, Skin and hair, Urological conditions.

# Industrial achievements and awards and Export

- Goldaru products are produced using the latest pharmaceutical technology in the world and the highest quality raw materials and are offered to the Iranian pharmaceutical market and several Asian and European countries.
- Goldaru benefits from cooperation of more than 20 of the most experienced academic experts in numerous scientific fields, including herbal medicine, pharmacognosy, industrial pharmacy, pharmacology, pharmaceutical chemistry, biotechnology and phytopharmacy in the technology and processing of its products.
- Currently, approximately 20% of the production of this company is exported to Iraq, Afghanistan, Oman, Yemen, Ukraine and North Africa.

#### **Certificates & Standards**

- Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- ISO 9001:2008 Certificates





www.goldaruco.com







# **Green Plants of Life Company**

### **Brief Overview**

Green Plants of Life Co. Ltd established in 1969 and its main activity has been the production and exports of various products.

### **Products/Services**

- Culinary herbs and dehydrated vegetable, either plain or mixed (based on Iranian cuisine and recipes)
- Tea qualities and infusions (black, green or herbal)
- Essential oils and extracts
- Dehydrated or dried fruits
- Dried flowers
- Roots
- Seeds
- Gums

# **Certificates & Standards**

ISO 9001/2008 standard for quality and management





www.greenplantsoflife.com





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# **Dineh Iran Industries Complex Company**

#### **Brief Overview**

Dinah Iran is the first producer of herbal medicines in Iran, It was established in 1980 by a group of young and passionate professional Individuals. Dinah Iran has worked for 40 years to standardize the quality of the herbal extracts by growing and maintaining all the herba without any chemical pesticides, Dinah makes sure that all the processes have the least side effects.

Dineh Iran is especially dedicated to producing medicines with unique formulations in such a manner that "Dineh calendula ointment", which has been produced for 25 years and has kept the customers satisfied, was selected as the superior product of 2011 and many other products of Dineh Iran such as C-lax tablet is very popular with consumers.

#### **Products/Services**

Dineh products used in the field of skin, respiratory, digestion, mouth and teeth, diabetes, women, nerves, muscular and skeletal, cardiovascular, weight loss and gain, antioxidant, supplement, children

# Industrial achievements and awards and Export

Dineh Industrial Complex of Iran was established in accordance with GMP principles, equipped with all kinds of modern devices and consists of the following units:

- Preparation and cleaning plant raw materials unit
- Plant drying unit
- Essential oil extraction unit
- Extraction unit
- Powder unit

# **Certificates & Standards**

IS09001:2008 license





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# Sepid Teb Nia Company

### **Brief Overview**

Sepid Teb Nia company is a health and well-being pharmaceutical company, active in the fields of producing different kinds of food supplements, herbal medicine and special chemical medicine since 2010.

Based on the principle of commitment to create and maintain the quality of the products, Sepid Teb designs, formulates and manufactures the products, relying on its specialized R&D team utilizing experienced and proficient experts that make us the best, unique and reliable laboratory in Iran.

### **Products/Services**

Today, Sepid Teb by launching more than 30 products in different fields of food supplements, herbal medicine and specialized chemical medicine has been established the high quality standards for domestic products on its activities.





# **NIAK Pharmaceutical Company**

#### **Brief Overview**

NIAK Pharmaceutical Company was established by investment of about 200 well-known experts in Pharmaceutics and food industries, agricultures, economics, and physicians in 1985 to study medicinal plants, production and processing of natural and health based medicines.

# **Products/Services**

NIAK Pharmaceutical Company has developed products in the field of Respiratory system, Respiratory system, Respiratory system, Musculoskeletal system & Pain relief, Nervous system, Hair & Skin, Heart, Circulatory & Endocrine systems

# Industrial achievements and awards and Export

The NIAK Pharmaceuticals intend to develop new herbal industry (Plan No.2) in accordance with the latest Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) standards after obtaining the necessary admission's license of development.

#### Certificates & Standards

- ISO 9001 (Quality Management System)
- ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System)
- ISO OHSAS 18001 (Occupational Safety and Health)
- ISO 10002 (Customer Satisfaction) and 5 S Certification (Work Environment Certification System) From TUV INTERCERT company (Germany)





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