

Recap on Preservatives

Ok, as you can see you have a lot of choices, and we only touched on some of the more commonplace and up and coming *new* preservatives.

The choices are fantastic. There is something to suit every formulation you might need, regardless of whether you need paraben free, glycol free, are making carbomer gels, using the Sepigel 305 gel matrix system, or working with surfactants.

Keep in mind, there is never a single preservative that can properly preserve *EVERYTHING* you might make. Keep a notebook that helps you understand and decide on which is the correct preservative to handle each formulating job you do. Eventually you will just automatically know.

Last thing. Preservatives also have shelf lives! Throw away anything on your formulating shelf if it has sat there for 2 years. Seriously. When I stock preservatives from the manufacturer I demand as close to the date of manufacture as possible. This is because there is generally a 2 - 3 year span for the preservatives. I want that shelf life to me on YOUR shelf, not already spent up sitting in the manufacturers warehouse.

Be sure to ASK your supplier what the retest date is for the batch of preservative your purchase is stocking from. You need to know this. If they have a retest date of Sept 08, that means the manufacturer will only guarantee another month of effectiveness in the bottle before used in a formula. Now, usually there is at least another year if the supplier has stored in a climate controlled environment, but you are not privy to that sort of detail.

So two things.. try to source your preservatives from suppliers that are turning it over fast enough to keep your shelf life as long as possible, and only purchase what you know you can use in a 6 mos or maximum 12 month period of time.

I know it sounds ironic, but preservatives can expire when they get to old..