

ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN
High-Performance Serum
FORMULATION
- THIRD EDITION -

MODULE 3 WORKBOOK

FORMULATING INNOVATIVE
ANHYDROUS SERUMS



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3.1 FORMULATING ANHYDROUS OIL-BASED SERUMS



1. Select all the ingredients, from the word bank below, which are suitable for anhydrous serums and add them to the ingredients list.

Word bank	Anhydrous serum ingredients list
aloe vera juice sweet almond oil glycerin rose hydrosol oil soluble botanical extracts ascorbic acid chia seed oil geranium essential oil esters Vitamin E coenzyme Q10 carotenoids niacinamide allantoin	

2. What are some of the similarities and differences between anhydrous serums and facial oils?

3.1 FORMULATING ANHYDROUS OIL-BASED SERUMS



3. Select a 'hero' ingredient for your serum and explain why you have chosen this ingredient.

What are your hero ingredient's skin benefits? How does it help contribute to your brand's image or create a product story? Does this ingredient meet a current market trend? Does this ingredient cater to a specific target audience and their values or needs?

4. Benchmark analysis – Select a product currently on the market to use as your benchmark product. A benchmark product is any product that has characteristics that you would like to match or emulate with your own product, and can be used as inspiration for the development of your own product.

Select any anhydrous serum you would like to base your own serum on to analyse, and use it to complete the **benchmark product analysis worksheet** below.

Tip: You could also use a facial oil for this activity and think of ways you could make this more premium, eg adding oil soluble actives or more premium oils.

5. Create your own anhydrous serum formulation taking inspiration from your chosen benchmark. Fill out the **product development brief** below.

BENCHMARK PRODUCT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Product name and brand	
Type of product	
Characteristics/properties/qualities Skin feel, texture, appearance, odor, absorbency, spreadability, cleansing capability, amount of foam, after-feel, etc.	
Purpose/function Where is it used? Outcome/benefits?	
Packaging type and aesthetics Jar, pump bottle, flip-top cap, tube, opaque/transparent.	
In what way would you like your product to be similar to the benchmark product?	

BENCHMARK PRODUCT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

[illegible]

*Optional. If you wish to reverse formulate or create a starting formula you can use this column.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT BRIEF: ANHYDROUS SERUMS

Formulator's name	
Product name and reference code (optional) For your own reference and record keeping.	
Product type Eg liquid, anhydrous serum, pressed serum, lip serum, eye serum, day or nighttime serum.	
Benchmark product (optional) This is a product on the market that you really like, which has characteristics you would like to match with your product.	
Are you formulating to meet a particular standard or certification? Organic, vegan, cruelty-free, fair trade? Which certifying body's standards will you meet? COSMOS, Ecocert, Vegan Society, etc?	
'Hero' or star ingredient Is there a particular ingredient that you want to use for the benefits it offers or for your brand/product story or marketing purposes?	

<p>Who is your target audience? Be as specific as possible, eg age, gender, lifestyle, values.</p>	
<p>What is the product positioning? Mass market/high-end? Target cost price per product? Retail price per product (RRP)?</p>	
<p>What skin type is it for? What problems are you solving?</p>	
<p>What is the purpose/ function of your product? Where will it be used? Outcome/benefits.</p>	
<p>What properties and qualities do you want your product to have? Consider texture, appearance, odor, mode of application.</p>	
<p>Packaging type and aesthetics Consider jars, bottles, glass/ plastic, opaque/transparent.</p>	

<p>Which oils are you using and why?</p> <p>Consider if they are liquid/solid, their properties/qualities, if they are accepted by organic standards, etc.</p>	
<p>Which esters are you using and why (if you are using them)?</p> <p>Consider their properties/qualities, if they are accepted by organic standards, etc.</p>	
<p>Which waxes/thickeners are you using and why (if you are using them)?</p> <p>Consider their properties/qualities, if they are accepted by organic standards, etc.</p>	
<p>Which active ingredients are you using and why?</p> <p>For example, vitamins or botanical extracts.</p>	
<p>Which essential oils/fragrance oils are you using and why?</p> <p>Consider what overall fragrance you want, eg uplifting, relaxing, floral, etc. Beneficial properties of the oils.</p>	
<p>Which other ingredients specific to this product type are you using and why?</p>	

FORMULATION WORKSHEET: ANHYDROUS SERUMS

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION:

After you have made your formula make a note of these product characteristics.

Appearance	
Odor	
Color	
Viscosity	
pH	

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING:

3.4 FORMULATION EXAMPLE: BARRIER SUPPORT SERUM



6. In **Lesson 3.4 Formulation example: Barrier Support Serum**, why is Phase B heated to 90-100°C and how can you heat Phase B to this temperature?

3.7 TROUBLESHOOTING ANHYDROUS SERUMS

7. a) Your serum or pressed serum feels too greasy or does not absorb quickly enough. How can you vary the formula to improve this?

b) Your pressed serum is too soft; how can you increase its firmness?

c) Your pressed serum is going grainy; what changes can you make to your method to improve this?



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ANSWERS

ANSWERS

3.1 FORMULATING ANHYDROUS OIL-BASED SERUMS

1.

Anhydrous serum ingredients list
sweet almond oil
oil soluble botanical extracts
chia seed oil
geranium essential oil
esters
Vitamin E
coenzyme Q10
carotenoids

2. There are no chemical differences between anhydrous serums and facial oils. Anhydrous serums contain more premium ingredients, such as more premium carrier oils, essential oils, and oil soluble actives and vitamins.
3. Please refer to **Lesson 3.1 Formulating anhydrous oil-based serums** and **Module 2 Serum Ingredients** for ingredient information.
4. Please refer to **Lesson 3.1 Formulating anhydrous oil-based serums**.
5. Please refer to **Lesson 3.1 Formulating anhydrous oil-based serums** and **Module 2 Serum Ingredients**.

ANSWERS

3.4 FORMULATION EXAMPLE: BARRIER SUPPORT SERUM

6. Ceramides need heating to a high temperature to melt. A water bath can be used, or alternatively a heatproof beaker can be placed directly on a hotplate.

3.7. TROUBLESHOOTING ANHYDROUS SERUMS

7.

- a) Adjust your formula to include lower amounts of slow-absorbing oils and add/increase amounts of lighter oils or esters to the formulation.
- b) Add 1-3% wax or thickener of your choice to the formula and decrease the quantity of liquid oils or soft butters by the same percentage. The waxes will help to solidify your product.
- c) Cool your product to room temperature whilst stirring, and then once the mixture starts to thicken, place in the fridge or freezer; or cool the mixture or product quickly in the fridge or freezer.





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