Gilbert's algae-based technology company Heliae Development LLC has begun operations at its first commercial facility, designed to produce nutraceutical and personal care products. The facility will expand its commercial production in 2014 to therapeutics and agroscience products.

“The startup of this plant represents a significant milestone for Heliae, but it’s just the beginning,” said Dan Simon, Heliae’s president and CEO, in a statement. “We are now demonstrating both the scalability of our technology platform and the economics of our approach. This step unlocks a robust pipeline of international projects that will allow us to further expand our footprint globally.”

The company announced in July it had raised $28.4 million from existing and new investors to help pay for this next-generation commercial algae facility on its 22-acre campus near Gilbert and Germann roads. Heliae and Triton Health and Nutrition, a division of San Diego-based Triton Algae Innovations, partnered last week to bring a new generation of therapeutics to market.

Heliae announced in May it was partnering with The Clarecastle Group to brand its own novel health and beauty products.

The company’s investors include select members of the Mars family, the ASEAN-based global conglomerate Salim Group, through one of its subsidiaries, Agri Investments Pte Ltd, and Thomas Edelman.

“With this facility, Heliae is delivering on the vision that was outlined almost six years ago,” said Frank Mars, Heliae’s co-founder and board chairman, in a statement. “This milestone would not have been possible without the dedicated and focused efforts of our team, as well as the continued support of our local partners, including Science Foundation Arizona, Arizona State University and the Town of Gilbert.”