

About Carolina Biological Supply Company

More than 80 years of world-class support for science education

From our beginnings in 1927, Carolina Biological Supply Company has grown to become a leading supplier of science teaching materials. Today, from our headquarters in Burlington, North Carolina, we serve customers worldwide, including teachers, professors, home-school educators, and professionals in health and science-related fields.

Our Mission:

To be the leading hands-on science and math education company in America.

Our Vision:

To provide educators the finest products and services that help students of all ages learn and understand science and math.

Background

Carolina began as the vision of Dr. Thomas E. Powell Jr., a young geology and biology professor at Elon College (now Elon University). During the 1920s, science teachers had to collect most of the materials they used in their classes and laboratories, which took considerable time away from their primary responsibilities. Like other teachers, Dr. Powell was spending much of his own time in the field gathering specimens for his classes. Because he usually got more than he needed, he sold the surplus to his colleagues. Dr. Powell foresaw that the coming years would bring a growing need for his collecting abilities. At first, Dr. Powell operated Carolina part-time. However, by the mid-1930s, the demand for teaching specimens and materials had developed into a full-time profession, and Carolina Biological Supply Company was on its way. Dr. Powell's vision of a company that would supply science materials to educational institutions around the world soon turned into reality.

Today

Carolina is truly one of the most extraordinary companies in the world. We work in partnership with educators and scientists to provide everything needed for science and math education, including:

- Living organisms including butterflies, drosophila, freshwater fish and much more
- Preserved specimens from each of the 5 kingdoms
- Materials for Life Science, Chemistry & Physics and Earth & Environmental Science
- Anatomical models and skeletons

- Laboratory equipment and supplies
- Microscopes and prepared microscope slides
- K-8 Curriculum programs, including the Science & Technology Concepts Program™ (STC Program™)
- Teacher resources including classroom activities
- Material Safety Data Sheets
- Lab & chemical safety information
- Genetics materials
- Books and charts
- Math products
- Biotechnology kits & materials
- Tissue culture materials
- And thousands of other items

Our trained biologists culture and ship over 30 species of protozoa, 150 types of bacteria and fungi, more than 130 kinds of algae, and numerous plant tissue cultures. We also maintain and culture over 75 strains of *Drosophila melanogaster*, the common fruit fly, for the educational market. Students throughout the country can selectively breed these organisms, gaining actual hands-on experience in genetics. Those who prefer plant genetics have a choice of more than 15 crosses of corn.

Our products also have been used by the scientific and health communities:

- Doctors needed medical leeches during surgery to reattach a person's severed ear. We supplied the medical leeches, which prevented the blood from clotting and rejection from occurring.
- NASA scientists wanted to test moon rocks for the presence of life. They required luciferase, an enzyme found in fireflies that reacts with ATP (a molecule found in all living creatures). We supplied the luciferase.
- Astronauts aboard the Space Shuttle Columbia tested flatworms for regeneration in the zero gravity of space. We supplied the planarians.

Success Stories

Carolina's staff was instrumental in creating the effective and successful Science and Technology Concepts® (STC®) program with the Smithsonian Science Education Center (SSEC). The SSEC is an organization created by the Smithsonian Institution and the National Academies. Its mission is to improve the learning and teaching of science for all children in the United States and throughout the world. Developed and tested by teachers, STC® is an inquiry-based K-8 science curriculum that engages students in hands-on learning.

Our staff also worked with the University of Wisconsin to develop Wisconsin *Fast Plants*® teaching materials. The Wisconsin *Fast Plants*® products address all aspects of plant biology

while providing hands-on learning opportunities for students. It is just another example of the benefits of our collaborative approach. Carolina was also the first company to:

- Successfully culture and ship living protozoa to schools around the United States
- Develop and perfect a culture medium for growing the colonial protist *Volvox*
- Create a substitute for formalin as a preservative—our revolutionary *Carolina's Perfect Solution*[®]
- Market thin-section microscope slides for the classroom, providing an exceptionally clear view of tissue structure
- Offer complete kits of materials for Advanced Placement[®] Biology
- Our scientific experts maintain a focus on new product development so we can continue to lead the way, in and out of the classroom.

World Class Support with Carolina.com

Since 1927, our collaborative approach has not only brought teachers innovative quality products, it has also been instrumental in providing world-class support that includes unmatched customer service and prompt, reliable delivery. Each department at Carolina works together to ensure that we have what you want when you want it. Every product we offer is backed by The Carolina Pledge: 100% Satisfaction Guaranteed. All of our products are unconditionally guaranteed. If for any reason you are not satisfied with any item, you may return it for a replacement, a refund, or credit. It's that simple.

Our Staff

Dr. Powell instilled 3 key words into every person he hired: innovation, quality, and service. He based these 3 principles on the belief that Carolina staff members remained a part of education and functioned as partners with colleagues working in the classroom.

Today, we employ over 450 people, many of whom are former educators and understand the unique challenges teachers face in the classroom and laboratory. Our staff often collaborate with teachers and institutions to create new educational products. The benefits of this approach can be seen in the way our materials help teachers engage and motivate students. If you are interested in working at Carolina, please see our current [Employment Opportunities](#).