



ASX ANNOUNCEMENT

Imugene Opens New Research Laboratory Facility at La Trobe University

Bird Flu Vaccine research to benefit

7th March 2006, Sydney: Imugene Limited (ASX:IMU) has commenced research in its new leased laboratory facility at La Trobe University. The laboratory will conduct research and development work on our viral vector programs. Research conducted at this laboratory will supplement the work carried out under contract at CSIRO. The new laboratory will be run by Imugene's Chief Scientific Officer, Dr Mike Sheppard, one of the original inventors of the vector technologies. The new laboratory will allow Dr Sheppard more direct input and control of the scientific program on a daily basis. The establishment of this new research capacity will assist in achieving Imugene's scientific goals more quickly than relying on contract research alone.

This new laboratory has received all the accreditations and permits required from the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR) to undertake the proposed research and development activities

Bird Flu Vaccine Program Upgraded

One of the main research programs to be undertaken at the new laboratory is a second Bird Flu Vaccine program. CSIRO has been working under contract on vaccine candidates for the H5N1 strain of the Bird Flu virus. That research work is directed predominantly at creating a vaccine for the broiler (meat bird) market. Imugene has now commenced a second Bird Flu vaccine program aimed at creating a vaccine for the egg layer and breeding bird market. This new vaccine research will be conducted at Imugene's new laboratory under the direct supervision of Imugene's Chief Scientific Officer, Dr Mike Sheppard.

Layer birds and birds used for breeding stock for the broiler market require longer lasting immunity to diseases than broiler birds, who typically reach slaughter weight by 42-49 days of age. The vaccine designed for layers and breeders will use two antigens (rather than the single antigen used in the broiler vaccine) to elicit both antibody and cell mediated immunity. The necessary genes have been selected and are being synthetically synthesized in Europe. Imugene expects to receive these genes within the next 4-6 weeks. The genes will then be inserted into the Fowl Adenovirus Vector to create vaccine candidates.

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As part of the new research program, Dr Sheppard will use the new synthetically synthesized gene to make updated versions of the single gene (HA gene) broiler vaccine at the La Trobe University laboratory.

Recent Publications on Avian Influenza support Imugene's research

Recent publications in scientific journals in which the HA antigen has been successfully inserted into adenoviruses to create an effective vaccine support the research approach Imugene has undertaken. The vaccines in publications to date still require at least two injections and take at least 21 days to provide immunity. This results in protection for only half the average life of a broiler (meat producing) bird. These parameters severely limit the commercial viability of the vaccines to date. The adenoviruses used have all been human strains or avian strains that are classed as "replication defective" This means they are unable to multiply in the birds and therefore require higher doses. In contrast, the Imugene vaccine candidates are based on Imugene's patented avian adenovirus that is replication competent (able to multiply after administration). This methodology has the following advantages:

1. Suitable for oral or in ovo (into the egg) administration
2. Lower dose (often 1/1000th of that required for replication defective vectors)
3. Possibility of single dose
4. Allows differentiation of vaccinated from infected birds

About Imugene

Imugene specialises in commercialising animal health products for production animals including pigs and poultry.

Imugene owns the worldwide rights to the *Fowl Adenoviral Vector Delivery System* for poultry and the *Porcine Adenoviral Vector Delivery System* for pigs. Imugene has successfully licensed the first product based on the *Fowl Adenoviral Vector Delivery System* -- the *Poultry Productivity Enhancer*.

Imugene's poultry and pig portfolio is targeting a worldwide US\$3 billion annual market with four lead vaccine products under development and a strong product pipeline. Consumer demands for disease free and residue free food will bolster Imugene's prospects.

Imugene's products safely prevent disease and reduce or eliminate antibiotics and harmful chemicals in animals. Animal antibiotics and chemicals in the human food chain have been linked to the emergence of dangerous resistant bacteria in people and food residues.

For more information please visit the Imugene Website www.imugene.com

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