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BioDiem partners with VIVALIS for vaccine development

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Singapore: Australian vaccine development company BioDiem announced that it has begun research collaboration with France-based VIVALIS, a biopharmaceutical company with expertise in vaccine production technologies. The collaboration involves investigation of the synergy of BioDiem's proprietary virus, LAIV, and VIVALIS' proprietary cell line, EB66. Successful results from this investigation could be used as a basis for a new agreement between the companies in order to test the feasibility of development of BioDiem's LAIV as a vector in VIVALIS' proprietary cell line.

Viral vector technology is used in vaccines to deliver immune-stimulating proteins into the body. VIVALIS is undertaking this initial research to further the high potential value of this technology in BioDiem's non-influenza vaccine applications.

BioDiem has considerable in-house expertise around the live attenuated influenza virus (LAIV), having an existing LAIV-based technology for the production of influenza vaccines, currently generating licensing revenues in India and China. BioDiem has proposed developing the LAIV as a versatile 'vector' (carrier) technology, which could be used to create a variety of new vaccines (both therapeutic and preventative). This proposed vector would be developed to have the additional advantages of a good safety profile and low toxicity (as the virus backbone is already weakened), excellent virus characterization from extensive prior work, and the ability to be customised to target particular diseases.

This initial collaboration involves VIVALIS confirming that BioDiem's LAIV strains grow satisfactorily in VIVALIS' proprietary cell line EB66 and examining any effects on the virus' characteristics. During this stage BioDiem's long-term collaborator, and LAIV developer, the Institute of Experimental Medicine in St Petersburg, will send an LAIV expert to work on-site with VIVALIS in France.

This initial program is estimated to take up to ten weeks. Following successful demonstrations of growth and productivity, BioDiem will look to negotiate another agreement with VIVALIS regarding a longer-term research project aimed at developing a stable LAIV vector technology incorporating EB66 as a base platform for growth.

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"VIVALIS is an ideal vaccine development partner, with a strong commercial mindset, a history of successful partnerships and great technology in the internationally established EB66 cell line. We are excited to be beginning this collaboration and moving forward on the LAIV vector project" said Mr Julie Phillips, CEO, BioDiem.

Mr Franck Grimaud, CEO, and Mr Majid Mehtali, CSO, who are the co-managers of VIVALIS jointly stated that, "Advancing the EB66 platform into novel areas is an objective we have maintained from the initial launch of the platform. This agreement with BioDiem, the second EB66 agreement since January 1, continues these objectives by moving our EB66 technology into applications like those being developed by BioDiem in the therapeutic and preventative vaccine fields. We look forward to working with BioDiem in this program and the possibility of expanding our relationship into a process development, a future commercial license and biomanufacturing agreement as we both advance the field of vaccine design and development."