



Microscience and Abgenix Form Alliance to Develop Monoclonal Antibodies in Infectious Disease

BERKSHIRE, England & FREMONT, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--May 7, 2003--Microscience and Abgenix (Nasdaq:ABGX) announced today that they will collaborate to discover, develop and commercialize new 'passive' immunotherapies against certain infectious disease targets using fully human monoclonal antibodies.

Under the terms of the agreement, Microscience will provide infectious disease target antigens and Abgenix will use its XenoMouse(R) technology to generate fully human antibodies. Both companies will screen and identify antibodies with therapeutic potential. Selected antibody product candidates will then be jointly developed.

The linking of Abgenix's antibody generation capabilities with Microscience's infectious disease expertise and protein vaccinology target identification platforms will make it possible for the companies to explore the use of monoclonal antibodies in the field of infectious disease, which have the potential to provide immediate protection for the recipient. The companies will work together exclusively with respect to each target to generate those antibodies that meet specific in-vitro and/or in-vivo efficacy criteria.

Abgenix will use its established XenoMouse antibody technology platform, which will make it possible to generate and screen the fully human monoclonal antibodies for use as potential immunotherapies against the targets supplied by Microscience. The companies intend to manufacture the product candidates using Abgenix's recently completed, state-of-the-art manufacturing facility at its Fremont, California headquarters.

"This collaboration highlights the versatility of human antibodies and their potential across a wide range of therapeutic areas," said Ray Withy, PhD, president and chief executive officer of Abgenix. "Human antibodies may offer advantages in treating infectious diseases and we are pleased to explore their applications in this area with Microscience."

Rod Richards, the CEO of Microscience in welcoming the collaboration with Abgenix said, "This alliance is a significant partnership. It provides us with access to a comprehensive set of antibody development resources and we can now move forward rapidly to capitalise on the full potential of our proven target identification platform."

Microscience is based in the UK near London where it has its own state of the art laboratory and development facility. The company has a broad portfolio of five vaccines with clinical development ongoing on the leading products. This includes oral vaccines to protect against Typhoid, another to prevent Traveller's diarrhoea and a therapeutic vaccine for Hepatitis B. Two injectable preventative vaccines to protect against Meningitis B and neonatal Group B Streptococcus infections are completing pre-clinical development. Further information can be found at www.microscience.com.

Abgenix is a biopharmaceutical company focused on the discovery, development and manufacturing of human therapeutic antibodies. The company's antibody development platform includes a leading technology and state-of-the-art manufacturing capabilities that enable the rapid generation, selection and production of high affinity, fully human antibody product candidates to a variety of disease targets. Abgenix leverages its leadership position in human antibody technology to build a diversified product portfolio through the establishment of collaborations with multiple pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. For more information on Abgenix, visit the company's website at www.abgenix.com.

Information in this press release may include forward-looking statements, which embrace risk and uncertainties. However all information included in this text is based on information available to our client at the time of issue. These statements are not guarantees of future performance and actual results could differ materially from current expectations.

Statements made in this press release about Abgenix's technologies, product development activities, collaborative arrangements and manufacturing activities, other than statements of historical fact, and about its projected financial results, are forward-looking statements and are subject to a number of uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from the statements made, including risks associated with the success of clinical trials, the progress of research and product development programs, product manufacturing, the regulatory approval process, competitive products, future capital requirements and the extent and breadth of Abgenix's patent portfolio. Please see Abgenix's public filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission for information about risks that may affect Abgenix.

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