

MEDICAGO ENGAGED BY THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP EBOLA MONOCLONAL ANTIBODIES.

QUEBEC (October 29, 2015)– Medicago, a leading Canadian company in the development and production of plant-based therapeutics and vaccines, has been awarded a contract by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to develop two antibodies to fight the Sudan strain of the Ebola virus. Medicago will produce these antibodies at its facility in Quebec City.

In producing this technology, Medicago will demonstrate a Canadian capability to manufacture monoclonal antibodies as part of emergency preparedness and response efforts. The Canadian government and Medicago are now working together on antibodies for the Sudan strain lineage, building on existing work directed at the Zaire strain which is responsible for the ongoing outbreak in West Africa. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the Ebola Sudan strain has previously been associated with large-scale outbreaks in Africa. The availability of an effective antibody would allow for an early intervention in case of a new outbreak involving the Sudan strain.

“Medicago will be using its technology and manufacturing system to collaborate with the Canadian government to provide a solution for the possible re-emergence of this devastating disease,” said Andy Sheldon, CEO of Medicago. “We are also proud to work on a Canadian solution that can be employed as a response to other biological threats that may impact national and international security in the future.

Using plants to fight Ebola, seasonal and pandemic influenza, and other health threats

Medicago's innovative technology uses plants as miniature factories that can quickly produce large quantities of vaccines or antibodies. This technology demonstrated its potential for responding to global pandemics when it produced candidate vaccines for H1N1 in 2009 and H7N9 in 2013 in just 19 days, compared to the several months required to produce vaccines using eggs.

The company, which recently announced an important expansion of its Quebec City facilities in May 2015, can rapidly produce anti-Ebola antibodies with high yields. Prior to this award, Medicago successfully completed the recent contract signed with the U.S. government to explore an alternate production method for Ebola antibodies against the Zaire strain. As governments around the world continue to face health threats such as pandemic strains of influenza and Ebola viruses Medicago has the potential to respond to international emergencies and can make a major contribution to rapid response, surge capacity and stockpiles across the globe.

About Medicago

Medicago is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company developing novel vaccines and therapeutic proteins to address a broad range of infectious diseases worldwide. The company is committed to providing highly effective and competitive vaccines and therapeutic proteins based on its proprietary Virus-Like Particles (VLPs) and manufacturing technologies.



This technology has the potential to offer vaccines and therapeutics with speed and cost advantages over competitive technologies, enabling the development of products for testing within approximately one month after the identification and reception of genetic sequences. This production time frame has the potential to rapidly vaccinate or treat populations and supply large volumes of products to the world market.

About the Public Health Agency of Canada's Research

Canada remains actively engaged and committed to supporting the global effort to combat Ebola virus disease. The two monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) to be produced with this contract were discovered by scientists at the Public Health Agency of Canada's (The Agency) National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg, Man. Researchers at the National Microbiology Laboratory also worked to develop Canada's VSV-EBOV Ebola vaccine — one of the leading vaccine candidates currently in clinical trials in Canada, the United States, Europe and West Africa.

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For more information

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