

PRESS RELEASE

VitamFero and Oniris have signed an agreement to study the efficacy of a vaccine candidate against neosporosis at a major centre for preclinical studies, the Oniris CRIP

From Evry and Nantes, 30 November 2011.

VitamFero, a biotechnology firm in the Genopole cluster that develops novel vaccines to prevent specific parasitic diseases, and Oniris, an institute of higher education and specialized research, particularly in human and animal health, announced the signing of a services contract to study the efficacy of a new generation vaccine candidate against bovine (cattle) neosporosis.

Neosporosis is an infectious disease caused by the parasite *Neospora caninum*. The infection bears responsibility for miscarriage, still-births, premature births, neonatal mortality, paralysis and growth retardation among many animal species, especially ruminants. Currently, there is only one vaccine against bovine/cattle neosporosis on the market, solely in North America, South America and New Zealand. It bears modest efficacy estimated at 50% in the best circumstances. Furthermore, the preparation is cumbersome to use due to the need for repeated inoculation. VitamFero's vaccine candidate will possibly meet this significant medical need.

"Our vaccine candidate developed on innovative technologies from VitamFero has already demonstrated its efficacy in initial mice studies, and we are very pleased to be able to collaborate with Oniris and the CRIP Centre in order to conduct, starting with ovine/sheep models, our efficacy studies for the prevention of miscarriage linked to neosporosis", indicated Edouard Sèche, R&D Director at VitamFero.

"We are very glad to be able to join VitamFero in validating its vaccine against neosporosis; this constitutes a very promising initiative with a view to effectively preventing this significant health problem among bovines and ovines (cattle and sheep)", announced Olivier Gauthier, Science Director of the Oniris CRIP Centre. *"Signing of this contract highlights the CRIP Centre's competences in conducting preclinical studies as well as the possibility of housing cohorts of large animals, such as goats,"* summarized Borhane Fellah, Operations Director of the CRIP Centre.



About VitamFero

Established in 2005, VitamFero (www.vitamfero.com) commercially develops major inventions patented jointly by France's CNRS (Scientific Research Centre), INRA (Agricultural Research Institute) and the University François-Rabelais of Tours in the field of anti-parasitic vaccines, an area in which needs are largely unmet.

About Oniris and the CRIP Centre (for Preclinical Studies)

Oniris is an institution of higher education and research specialized in human and animal health, foodstuffs and health applications of biotechnology. This organization of 500 staff hosts 1,200 veterinary engineers/doctors. In parallel, Oniris is dynamizing research in its fields by federating 14 research groups, along with 4 technology platforms and two technical facilities considered among the best in Europe.

Via those platforms, the CRIP Centre offers a range of services from joint studies and sharing of assessment tools to complete piloting of preclinical studies. The main activities of the CRIP Centre involve biomaterials, metabolic diseases, oncology and cardiovascular illness. The CRIP's offering hinges on its husbandry resources of many experimental animal species for surgery, medical imaging (radiology, fluoroscopy, ultrasound imaging, scintigraphy, MRI, Micro PET scan etc.) and functional investigation, as well as on an ensemble of biological and morphological analytic tools (in medical biology, pathological anatomy, immuno-monitoring, molecular biology etc.).



About Genopole®

The foremost French biopark dedicated to genetic research and biotechnology as applied to health and environmental issues. **Genopole** clusters 20 research labs, 66 biotech firms and university training (University of Evry-Val d'Essonne). Its goal is to foster research in genomics, post-genomics and related sciences, and facilitating commercial development, high level education/training in those fields and to create and support biotech companies (www.genopole.fr).

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