



Inviragen

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InViragen Receives \$600,000 Grant to Develop Avian Influenza Vaccines

Fort Collins, CO and Madison, WI,

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InViragen has received a Small Business Technology Transfer award from the National Institutes of Health to support its collaboration with the University of Wisconsin to develop a safe and effective avian influenza vaccine. The two-year, \$600,000 grant will fund the construction and testing of novel vaccines designed to protect against the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza virus.

“We are pleased to receive funding from the NIH for support of our avian influenza vaccine research efforts,” said Dr. Dan Stinchcomb, InViragen’s Chief Executive Officer. “This new project combines Inviragen’s expertise in genetic engineering of vaccines for respiratory diseases with the world-renowned influenza expertise at University of Wisconsin.”

The H5N1 strain of influenza virus emerged recently in Southeast Asia producing severe flu outbreaks in poultry and wild birds. H5N1 flu virus has quickly spread throughout Asia, Europe and Africa. The virus has infected humans through bird to human transmission, resulting in high mortality rates. Further flu virus reassortment or mutation might create a virus capable of human- to human transmission that could cause a worldwide flu pandemic.

“With this funding, we will optimize H5N1 antigen expression in Inviragen’s second generation vaccine vectors. The resulting vaccines will be tested for safety and for the ability to protect animals from H5N1 influenza,” said Dr. Jorge Osorio, Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin. “Our goal is to develop a vaccine that is easy to manufacture, simple to administer and provides broad protection against multiple H5N1 isolates.”

Since 2003, H5N1 avian influenza has infected 355 individuals leading to 206 deaths.

Should the virus mutate or reassort so that it can be transmitted from human to human as

effectively as the current seasonal influenza viruses, the global case load and mortality could be staggering. Currently, there is capacity to manufacture only 565 million doses of the seasonal influenza vaccine, far short of the 6.7 billion doses that would be required for a global pandemic. Inviragen will use its international network to produce an avian influenza vaccine to help bridge this gap.

About InViragen

Co-founded by Dr. Jorge Osorio and Dr. Dan Stinchcomb, InViragen is developing life-saving vaccines to protect against emerging infectious diseases worldwide. In addition to the avian influenza project described here, InViragen is developing a vaccine to protect against dengue fever for global markets, a vaccine to protect against West Nile for the U.S. markets and a combination plague and smallpox vaccine for biodefense. InViragen has offices in Fort Collins, Colorado and Madison, Wisconsin. Please see www.inviragen.com for more details.