



October 3, 2011

Canadian biotech company to explore UAE investment, partnership opportunities

Proprietary technology turns tobacco plants into cancer fighters

GUELPH, Ontario, Canada— [PlantForm Corporation](#), a Canadian biotech company focused on producing ultra-low-cost therapeutic antibody drugs, will attend the [Abu Dhabi Medical Congress Oct. 23-25](#) to pursue strategic investment and partnership opportunities that align with the GCC's progress towards economic diversification.

"PlantForm welcomes the opportunity to attend the Abu Dhabi Medical Congress to introduce our novel, tobacco-plant-based technology platform for cancer and anti-inflammatory drugs," says David Cayea, Director of International Relations and Business Development. "We look forward to sharing our progress on low-cost antibody production with the United Arab Emirates medical establishment, pharmaceutical companies and the business community as we look for strategic investment and joint venture relationships."

PlantForm was established in 2008 to commercialize a proprietary, plant-based manufacturing platform for producing antibody therapeutics for cancer and other critical illnesses. The company's first product will be [plant-produced trastuzumab](#), a subsequent-entry-biologic (SEB) version of the breast cancer drug Herceptin®.

[Lab studies](#) have established that PlantForm's SEB trastuzumab, produced in tobacco plants, is equivalent to Herceptin® in terms of purity and activity. Animal studies are now under way with clinical trials to follow.

"Antibody drugs are revolutionizing medicine but the problem with so many brand-name drugs today is that they can be extremely expensive," says Don Stewart, PlantForm President and CEO. "Patients, health-care providers and insurers all want access to more affordable alternatives. We anticipate our technology will lower manufacturing costs for antibody therapeutics by as much as 90 per cent."

Herceptin® earned \$5.7 billion in 2010 for the Roche Group. Stewart estimates the market potential for SEB trastuzumab is \$2 billion a year by 2016 and \$4 billion to \$5 billion a year by 2019 as Herceptin® patents expire around the world.

PlantForm's pipeline also includes SEB versions of other drugs for cancer and inflammatory diseases that, together with Herceptin®, are forecast to have annual global sales in excess of \$40 billion by 2013.

An expert panel of Canadian and U.S. venture capitalists selected PlantForm as a leading investment opportunity and winner in the life sciences category of the [Canada's Top 10™ Competition](#) in 2010 and 2008-09.

The company licenses its technology from the [University of Guelph](#), where it was developed by [Dr. J. Christopher Hall](#), the Canada Research Chair in Recombinant Antibody Technology and PlantForm's Chief Scientific Officer. All relevant intellectual property is protected by patent filings.

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