Recombinetics Uses NIH Grant and Pigs to Advance War on Atherosclerosis and Heart Disease

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Recombinetics

St. Paul, MN (RPRN) 01/17/13 — Little more than one year after receiving a $318,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) to employ genetically modified pigs in the battle against atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) and heart disease, St. Paul, MN-based Recombinetics is taking the next big step.

The company, which uses innovative gene editing and gene repair technologies to provide cutting edge research tools to scientists who study persistent human health risks, will soon deliver the first set of pigs to academic collaborators to fully characterize progression of the disease. Recombinetics used a line of Ossabaw pigs licensed from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis that are genetically predisposed to develop Metabolic Syndrome, a collection of factors associated with coronary artery disease, stroke and Type II diabetes. Humans who suffer from Metabolic Syndrome are likely to develop these same diseases, which affect about 100 million Americans every year at a cost of over $400 billion.

Recombinetics used its proprietary technologies to rapidly develop atherosclerosis in pigs – almost exactly as the human heart might do. The modified pigs will rapidly and consistently mimic the human version of atherosclerosis and its progression, making them invaluable to researchers studying new ways to prevent and treat this and other conditions leading to heart disease, America's number one killer.

Recombinetics' collaborators will carefully monitor the pigs using telemetry and high resolution imaging, and will chart the time course and pathology of disease onset and severity of atherosclerosis. Once the process is complete, animals will be available to research facilities in small numbers within the first months of 2014, according to Scott Fahrenkrug, Recombinetics CEO and Chairman.

"Until now, large animal models that predictably and consistently develop hardening of the arteries and heart disease have not been available to researchers working to prevent and treat these diseases. Using this NIH grant, we have utilized our own gene editing technology to produce pigs that will certainly speed, and could well revolutionize research into a family of diseases that kill hundreds of thousands of Americans every year and millions worldwide."

The animals will be Recombinetics' first commercial product, explained Fahrenkrug. Recombinetics is currently seeking private investors in support of its continued development and growth and was recently issued three landmark patents for gene editing and gene repair technology. The company also holds a global, exclusive license from Cellectis Bioresearch for application of homing endonucleases to livestock for biomedicine and animal agriculture.

ABOUT RECOMBINETICS

Founded in 2008, Recombinetics, Inc. is a global innovator in proprietary precision gene repair and gene editing technology. Breakthrough scientific research - including the development of TALEN technologies- has resulted in global exclusive rights in the biomedical, animal agriculture and livestock vertical markets. Recombinetics has garnered both private sector funding and significant development contracts from the National Institutes of Health, the US Department of Agriculture and the global commercial leaders in livestock genetics.

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