



This press release contains forward-looking statements that involve inherent risks and uncertainties. We have identified certain important factors that may cause actual results to differ materially from those contained in such forward-looking statements. See our Form 20-F, as filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission on June 29, 2001 and the section of the Form 20-F entitled “Risk Factors”.

CruCell: preliminary Phase I data of PER.C6-derived HIV vaccine encouraging

Leiden, The Netherlands, March 5, 2002– Dutch antibody and vaccine company CruCell N.V. (NASDAQ, Euronext: CRXL) today said initial data from a Phase I trial involving Merck & Co. Inc.’s experimental HIV vaccine look encouraging. The HIV vaccine, based on a recombinant adenovirus, is produced on CruCell’s proprietary PER.C6 cell technology platform to facilitate the industrial-scale manufacturing of a safe vaccine to meet global demand.

The data, presented at the 9th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections in Seattle, show that the vaccine for both the prevention and treatment of HIV was generally well-tolerated by the healthy volunteers enrolled in the study and generated a substantial and prolonged specific T cell response. In comparison to vaccinations with naked DNA, the adenovirus-based vaccine showed a stronger anti-HIV immune response.

Merck & Co. has stressed that the data are preliminary and inconclusive as the Phase I trial is still ongoing and that it is too early to speculate on when data of the entire Phase I trial will be presented. Last month, Merck & Co. released data showing that monkeys that had been given the vaccine did not develop AIDS after being infected with an HIV-like virus. According to UNAIDS, five million people were infected with HIV in 2001, bringing the total number of people living with HIV to 40 million.

CruCell’s CEO Dinko Valerio said that though the results are preliminary and inconclusive, research is on the right track. “The data further confirm that Merck & Co.’s adenovirus-based HIV vaccine is one of the most promising candidates to date. CruCell is proud to have developed a vital element of their vaccine.”

CruCell and Merck & Co. signed an agreement in October 2000, granting Merck & Co. an exclusive commercial license to the PER.C6 platform to develop the vaccine. The agreement provides for upfront and ongoing fees and royalty and milestone payments paid by Merck & Co. to CruCell. It further provides Merck & Co. the option of extending the exclusivity to cover three additional diseases in the future.



About Crucell

Dutch biotechnology company Crucell discovers and develops antibody and vaccine products against cancer, inflammatory and infectious diseases.

The company licenses products with (bio)pharmaceutical companies for which it receives upfront and annual payments, milestones and royalties.

Crucell is currently developing antibodies against different types of cancer and has additional programs in inflammation, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. Crucell will leverage its proprietary MAbstract technology to discover new targets and antibodies.

Crucell's CD 46 antibody against various types of cancers is licensed to Centocor, a Johnson & Johnson company. Crucell retains the commercial rights for Europe for this product.

Merck & Co. has obtained the exclusive rights to use Crucell's PER.C6 human cell system for the production of the vaccine's key adenoviral vector. Merck & Co. is currently conducting Phase I/II trials with its vaccine.

The company has furthermore developed a revolutionary new flu vaccine production system, based on its patented human cell system PER.C6. PER.C6 is widely embraced by the industry for the production of gene therapy products and viral vectors.

Crucell has been listed on the NASDAQ and Euronext exchanges since October 2000. Crucell has its headquarters in Leiden, the Netherlands, and currently employs 180 people.

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