



Innovation in life sciences



PBL

NEWS

PBL wishes all our readers a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year

Winter 2004 : PBL News No.6

Fast Track For Functional Foods

PBL and Nutrinnovator form Technology Alliance

nutrinnovator

PBL is delighted to have teamed up with Nutrinnovator Holdings plc in a substantial alliance in which PBL will seek innovative new technologies for this exciting new company. Nutrinnovator, founded in February 2003 and listed on London's AIM market in June 2004, develops and commercialises wellbeing food and beverage products, ranging from mass market products through to functional and nutraceutical foods (www.nutrinnovator.com).

PBL will be using its international network of research contacts to seek and acquire new technology that could form the basis of new and nutritionally excellent food products and ingredients. The partnership with Nutrinnovator will enable an accelerated track through early assessment, intellectual property protection and into product development, and will ensure that the necessary investment and attention is rapidly applied to realize the full potential of emerging new nutritional technologies.

If you have new innovations and technology in the area of innovative, functional or nutraceutical foods please contact us (ajsc@pbltechnology.com).

IP protection

Funds and manages patent filing and prosecution

Builds complementary technology packages

Markets technology to commercial users

Concludes and monitors technology licences

Manages and mentors the formation of new technology-based businesses

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PBL at Rothamsted

In an important step in our growing relationship with Rothamsted Research, PBL has opened its new office at the BBSRC-sponsored research institute in Harpenden, UK. The office will be a permanent base for Dr Adam Hajjar and will also be used by other PBL staff when visiting Rothamsted. PBL is working with Rothamsted to commercialise a growing portfolio including cis-jasmone as a plant protection agent and gene switch, and naphthoquinone resistance-defeating insecticides. Professor Ian Crute, the Institute Director said "I expect PBL to become an increasingly important component of the Rothamsted strategy for knowledge transfer and I am particularly pleased to have Adam based with us to further the process."

Contact details for PBL at Rothamsted:
Dr Adam Hajjar (adam@pbltechnology.com)
01582 763133 ext 2730

TDP Funding from PBL

PBL's new programme for fund critical technology development work has attracted a great deal of interest since it launched in April. From many proposals, PBL has so far committed over £140,000 to five TDP project investments with a further ten short listed and under review/development. Details of most projects are still confidential, however John Innes Centre, IFR and Rothamsted have all been involved in approved TDP projects. The first project has already achieved a highly successful outcome and IP protection is being progressed and a commercial partner engaged. We welcome new ideas for TDP's at any time and if you have ideas for a TDP or would like to know how to get TDP investment please see our website <http://www.pbltechnology.com/tdp.html>

New Product Launched from JIC research

Vivascience launches new product under PBL licence

Under licence from PBL, Vivascience (www.vivascience.com) have successfully launched Vivapure® C18 Micro spin columns, a revolutionary protein purification technology ideally suited for the concentration, purification and desalting of peptides prior to analysis. The underlying technology was invented by Dr Mike Naldrett at the John Innes Centre. Patents were filed by PBL in 2001, granted in UK in 2003 and others are pending around the world. An exclusive worldwide licence was signed with Vivascience Limited in 2003, and the first product has reached the market less than a year later.





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New PBL-JIC Venture in Genetic Services



PBL is delighted to announce the establishment of IDna Genetics Limited, a joint venture between PBL and The John Innes Centre. The company is a service business offering genotyping and GMO testing services to the plant breeding industry and academia.

IDna Genetics vision is to become the leading supplier of genetic services to the seeds sector. IDna Genetics is headed up by Dr Pete Isaac, well known to many in the plant science world and who has sixteen years experience in the plant breeding and molecular service industries in France and the UK. The IDna laboratories are equipped with state-of-the-art equipment for molecular analysis including real-time PCR facilities and an ABI3730 capillary sequencer for genotyping.



Dr Jan Chojcecki, PBL's Managing Director said "IDna Genetics is already taking orders from seed companies and public sector research groups and we expect its business to grow quickly. The company will also be an excellent channel to develop and exploit a whole host of new genetic technologies, tests and assays which PBL can bring to it from our public sector research partners".

IDna Genetics is based in the Norwich BiolIncubator and can be contacted on:
+44 (0)1603 450941
or by email (peterisaac@idnagenetics.com).

Patents Granted:

PBL issued Pivotal RNAi Gene Silencing Patent

In February 1999, David Baulcombe and Andrew Hamilton of the Sainsbury Laboratory first announced their discovery that they had identified the elusive effectors of post-transcriptional gene silencing (PTGS). Formally reporting these results in *Science Vol. 286, pp950-952, 1999*, this seminal and since widely validated discovery has facilitated exponential developments in the fields of gene silencing and gene regulation. Now, after a successful patent prosecution process, PBL is pleased to announce that on 22 June 2004, the United States Patent Office has recognized this discovery with the issuance of US Patent No. 6,753,139 encompassing methods of detection of gene silencing in plants, and methods of isolating gene silencing effectors from plants. A series of additional patent filings are pending in the United States directed to the effector molecules themselves, methods of detection of gene silencing in organisms generally, and to methods of inducing gene silencing. PBL is actively exploring its options for commercial recognition of this proprietary technology.

Enquiries to: lars@pbltechnology.com

Several other patents from PBL have been granted in recent months, among them are some of the following:

August 2004 - EP0959941B1
ELECTRO-RELEASE SYSTEMS
Chris Pickett and Saad Ibrahim, John Innes Centre
Licensed to Chameleon BioSurfaces Limited.

August 2004 - EP1287158B1
SCREENING SYSTEM FOR ANTIBIOTICS
"Signal" SigE Antibiotic screening system
Mark Buttner and colleagues, John Innes Centre
TECH ID: 00.217

August 2004 - US Patent No. 6,781,034
STRESS TOLERANT PLANTS
Flavodoxin Gene
Nestor Carillo and colleagues, University Nacional de Rosario, Argentina
TECH ID: 01.266

September 2004 - US Patent No. 6,791,007
POLYNUCLEOTIDE AND ITS USE FOR MODULATING A DEFENCE RESPONSE IN PLANTS
The Mlo Gene
Paul Schulze-Lefert and colleagues while at The Sainsbury Laboratory and co-owned with Keygene (Netherlands) (see also Nature 19 August 2004, vol. 430, pp. 887-891).
TECH ID: 95.054

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