

Aventis Pasteur



Aventis Press Release

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Aventis and Department of Health and Human Services Enter Into Pandemic Influenza Vaccine Agreement

World's Largest Influenza Vaccine Producer Receives Multi-million Dollar Contract To Produce Avian Influenza Vaccine Doses

SWIFTWATER, Pa., September 21, 2004 ? Aventis, part of the sanofi-aventis Group, has been awarded a contract by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to produce influenza vaccine containing an attenuated version of the H5N1 influenza virus strain. The H5N1 strain is an avian virus strain that recently emerged in Southeast Asia and other countries and continues to circulate. It has the potential to become a human pandemic strain. As of September 9, the World Health Organization reported 40 cases of H5N1 avian influenza disease in humans that resulted in 29 deaths.

Aventis Pasteur, the human vaccines business of Aventis, part of the sanofi-aventis Group, has agreed to produce two million doses of bulk vaccine containing the potential pandemic virus strain. Production and storage will take place at the company's facility in Swiftwater, Pa. The company will be paid nearly \$13 million for the vaccine.

“As the world's largest supplier of influenza vaccine, Aventis Pasteur is committed to partnering with the government to develop a safe and effective vaccine in preparation for a possible influenza pandemic,” said David J. Williams, chairman and chief executive officer of Aventis Pasteur. “This new contract with HHS will further increase our experience in pandemic vaccine production. In addition, we continue to pursue additional opportunities for working with governments around the world on related initiatives.”

The H5N1 vaccine will be manufactured from a seed virus provided by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH). The seed virus is a weakened version of the wild type virus and was extensively tested prior to delivery to Aventis Pasteur.

Earlier this year, Aventis Pasteur entered into an agreement with NIAID to produce 8,000 doses of the H5N1 influenza virus strain for use in clinical trials.

Influenza epidemics occur every year and result in an annual average of 36,000 deaths and 200,000 hospitalizations in the United States, mostly among chronically ill persons and seniors, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). An influenza pandemic is a global epidemic of an especially virulent virus with the potential for severe morbidity and mortality. According to the World Health Organization, the next pandemic is likely to result in 1 to 2.3 million hospitalizations and 280,000 to 650,000 deaths in industrialized nations. Its impact will most likely be even more devastating in developing countries.

About Aventis

Aventis is dedicated to treating and preventing disease by discovering and developing innovative prescription drugs and human vaccines. In 2003, Aventis generated sales of €16.79 billion, invested € 2.86 billion in research and development and employed approximately 69,000 people in its core business. Aventis corporate headquarters are in Strasbourg, France. For more information, please visit: www.aventis.com.

Aventis Pasteur, the vaccines business of Aventis, part of the sanofi-aventis Group, produced 1.4 billion doses of vaccine in 2003, making it possible to protect 500 million people across the globe, which is about 1.4 million per day. The company offers the broadest range of vaccines, providing protection against 20 bacterial and viral diseases. For more information, please visit: www.aventispasteur.com

Aventis Forward Looking Statement

Statements in this document containing projections or estimates of revenues, income, earnings per share, capital expenditures, capital structure, or other financial items; plans and objectives relating to future operations, products, or services; future economic performance; or assumptions underlying or relating to any such statements, are forward-looking statements subject to risks and uncertainties. Actual results

could differ materially depending on factors such as the timing and effects of regulatory actions, the results of clinical trials, the company's relative success developing and gaining market acceptance for new products, the outcome of significant litigation, and the effectiveness of patent protection. Additional information regarding risks and uncertainties is set forth in the current Annual Report on Form 20-F of Aventis on file with the Securities and Exchange Commission and in the current Annual Report - "Document de Référence" - on file with the "Autorité des marchés financiers" in France.

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