

Bionas and PRIMACYT to cooperate on cell-based assay for prediction of hepatotoxic effects of drugs and chemicals

September 29, 2006 – Bionas (Rostock, Germany), a specialist for in vitro profiling the metabolic activity of cells, and PRIMACYT (Schwerin, Germany), announced that they have entered into a cooperation aimed at the development of a cell-based assay using primary human hepatocytes for prediction of hepatotoxic effects in response to test compounds.

Primary human hepatocytes, provided by PRIMACYT, are cultivated directly on collagen-coated Bionas® metabolic chips SC1000 with PRIMACYT's proprietary and chemically defined media. The chips are then placed into the Bionas® 2500 analyzing system to evaluate the effect of test compounds. After a recovery period the hepatocytes can be re-used for further experiments in Bionas® 2500 analyzing system.

"Our study using primary human hepatocytes and Bionas® 2500 analyzing system shows very promising results and could be ideally suited to predict hepatotoxic effects in vitro," says Dr. Ralf Ehret, general manager of Bionas GmbH.

Predicting liver toxicity is a major concern of the pharmaceutical industry and primary human hepatocytes can be used as biosensors for the analysis of drugs, food additives and chemicals. A cell-based assay based on the Bionas® 2500 analyzing system and primary hepatocytes may aid compound selection in the drug discovery process and may reduce both the number of animal studies and preclinical development time. More detailed information about the study can be obtained from Bionas GmbH.

About Bionas – www.bionas.de

Bionas GmbH, situated in Rostock, Germany, specializes in analyzing systems and services for in-vitro profiling the metabolic activity of cells to understand cellular function. Bionas® 2500 analyzing system measures extracellular acidification, oxygen consumption and cell adhesion in a label-free and non-invasive way and can be applied to various cell types including primary cells. The readout is carried out continuously and can be watched online. Main applications include drug profiling, lead optimization, early toxicology programs, ADME/Tox, chemosensitivity testing, toxicological testing of chemical substances (REACH) and cell culture monitoring/optimization. Micronas Holding GmbH and GENIUS Venture Capital GmbH fund the company.

About PRIMACYT – www.primacyt.de

PRIMACYT Cell Culture Technology GmbH has its roots in HeparCell GmbH, originally founded by four private individuals in June 2004. In October 2005 HeparCell GmbH changed its corporate name to PRIMACYT Cell Culture Technology. With HEPAC² the young biotech start up company offers a validated, serum-free, long-term human hepatocyte culture system. HEPAC² serves as a biosensor for the toxicological analysis of drugs, food additives, and chemicals and their impact on hepatocellular metabolism and functions. HEPAC² allows the repetitive application of drugs within one cell culture. Thereby, the system is designed to reduce the number animal experiments and to reduce the costs of preclinical studies. PRIMACYT is certified according to DIN EN ISO 9001 (2000) and DIN EN ISO 13485 (2003) and is currently undergoing the process to become a GLP certified laboratory.

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