

Sigma-Aldrich Signs License Agreement With Polyplus-transfection to Offer Novel ZNA(TM) Oligonucleotides

Commercialization of ZNA technology provides solutions for increased affinity for nucleic acids

ST. LOUIS, Nov 03, 2009 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Sigma-Aldrich (Nasdaq: SIAL) today announced a worldwide licensing agreement with Polyplus-transfection (Strasbourg, France) to manufacture and commercialize Zip Nucleic Acid (ZNA(TM)*) oligonucleotides, a new technology that provides solutions for increased affinity for nucleic acids. Under the terms of the license, Sigma-Aldrich has rights to manufacture and commercialize ZNA oligonucleotides for all research applications. Sigma-Aldrich is the first company to offer ZNA as custom DNA and RNA oligonucleotides to the life science community.

ZNA are oligonucleotides with attached cationic units. They offer significant value for a variety of applications in research and diagnostics applications. Research applications include PCR probes, PCR primers, *in-vitro* micro RNA detection and inhibition and siRNA. The addition of cationic residues to oligonucleotides increases their sensitivity and their ability to detect mutations, while remaining both easy to design and cost effective. ZNA also offers an increased affinity for nucleic acids without losing selectivity, improving performance in hybridization techniques.

"Sigma-Aldrich offers the largest portfolio of modifications and labels for oligonucleotides. We consider ZNA an important addition to our portfolio. The increased performances seen for ZNA oligonucleotides offers advantages for our customers, and we look forward to making this technology available to our global customer base," commented Theresa S. Creasey, Ph.D., Vice President of Sigma(R) Custom Products, Sigma-Aldrich.

Frederic Perraud, CEO of Polyplus-transfection, added: "We are very proud to collaborate with a leading life science company such as Sigma-Aldrich. This major agreement gives access to our ZNA technology to scientists worldwide and allows Polyplus to capitalize on its nucleic acid delivery research toward innovative applications in molecular biology."

Sigma-Aldrich offers a comprehensive collection of customized oligonucleotide services, including DNA oligos, DNA probes, RNA, siRNA oligos and peptide synthesis. For more information on ZNA from Sigma-Aldrich, visit <http://www.sigma.com/znaoligos>.

**About ZNA(TM)*

ZNA(TM) (Zip Nucleic Acids) are oligocation-oligonucleotide conjugates that have an increased affinity for their complementary sequence without losing selectivity. This affinity increase is due to the cationic moieties, which reduce the charge repulsion between the two strands of nucleic acid. Thanks to the non-directive nature of electrostatic interactions, this affinity gain is independent of the base sequence and hence predictable, thus making the design of ZNA extremely easy. ZNA are made with a standard oligonucleotide synthesizer allowing fast, cost effective production as well as the ability to add other modifications such as fluorescent markers.

About Sigma-Aldrich

Sigma-Aldrich is a leading Life Science and High Technology company. Its biochemical and organic chemical products and kits are used in scientific and genomic research, biotechnology, pharmaceutical development, the diagnosis of disease and as key components in pharmaceutical and other high technology manufacturing. Sigma-Aldrich has customers in Life Science companies, university and government institutions, hospitals, and in industry. Over one million scientists and technologists use its products. Sigma-Aldrich operates in 38 countries and has 7,800 employees providing excellent service worldwide. Sigma-Aldrich is committed to Accelerating Customer Success through Innovation and Leadership in Life Science, High Technology and Service.

About Polyplus-transfection

Polyplus-transfection is a research-focused company developing and marketing innovative solutions for transfection and therapies based on nucleic acid delivery. Based in Strasbourg, France, the company has been selling its transfection reagents since 2001. The multidisciplinary Polyplus R&D team includes chemists, molecular and cellular biologists. Polyplus-transfection has extended its field of expertise to molecular biology reagents with the development of ZNA(TM) oligonucleotides. The company has numerous patents pending and licenses in the fields of nucleic acid delivery and modified oligonucleotides.

Cautionary Statement

This release contains forward-looking statements relating to future strategic actions and initiatives and similar intentions and beliefs and other statements regarding the Companies' expectations, beliefs, intentions and the like, which involve assumptions regarding the Companies' operations and conditions in the markets the Companies serve. The Companies do not undertake any obligation to update these forward-looking statements.

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