



Biotech Daily

Thursday March 17, 2011

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX FLAT, BIOTECH DOWN: GENERA UP 8%; OPTISCAN DOWN 11%**
- * **IMMURON ORAL INFLUENZA PROGRAM EFFECTIVE IN FERRETS**
- * **GIACONDA CREEPS CLOSER TO DOCA REVIVAL**
- * **SIGNOSTICS POCKET SIZED ULTRASOUND WINS DESIGN GONG**
- * **SOLAGRAN SIGNS SIEBELCO AS SALES, MARKETING PARTNER**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market slipped 0.06 percent on Thursday March 17, 2011, with the S&P ASX 200 down 2.9 points to 4555.3 points.

Ten of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 19 fell, six traded unchanged and five were untraded.

Genera was best, up two cents or 7.7 percent to 28 cents, with 69,800 shares traded, followed by Genetic Technologies up 6.1 percent to seven cents with 295,090 shares traded.

Patrys climbed 4.2 percent; Benitec, Cellmid and Heartware were up more than three percent; Biota and QRX rose more than two percent; with Cochlear, Phylogica and Sirtex up more than one percent.

Optiscan led the falls, down 0.6 cents or 10.9 percent to 4.9 cents, with 20,000 shares traded, followed by Phosphagenics down 9.1 percent to 10 cents with 2.9 million shares traded.

Psivida lost 8.75 percent; Prana was down 6.7 percent; Prima and Universal Biosensors fell more than four percent; Living Cell lost 3.3 percent; Cathrx, Chemgenex, Circadian and Impedimed shed more than two percent; with Acrux, Bionomics, Nanosonics and Starpharma down more than one percent.

IMMURON

Immuron says that preliminary experiments at the University of Melbourne indicate that its influenza candidate IMM255 is effective in ferrets.

Immuron previously said its bovine colostrum-based antibody influenza product had the potential to be "the world's first orally administered product for mucosal protection against influenza viruses" (BD: Mar 1, 2011).

Immuron said the findings were highly encouraging and indicated the need for further experiments to support the results of the trials of IMM255 and extend them to more prevalent strains of influenza virus.

The company said ferrets were the gold standard in human influenza experiments because they were naturally susceptible to the human influenza virus.

Immuron said the research intended to identify the protective action of Immuron's antibodies against infection with H1N1 human virus isolates.

Chief executive officer Joe Bains said Immuron was pursuing "the lucrative large market opportunity of influenza prevention".

"The board has decided to proceed to further testing in ferrets, aiming to confirm these results, which should inform the design for future human trials," Mr Bains said.

"Our commitment is based on internal confidence and strong encouragement from eminent medical researchers in infectious diseases", Mr Bains said.

Immuron said that in parallel to the University of Melbourne ferret research, its research team at Jerusalem's Hadassah Medical Center investigated the effect on the cell-mediated immune system when mice were fed anti-influenza antibodies to further define mechanisms of action.

The company said anti-influenza antibodies led to improved cell activation against several strains of influenza virus.

Immuron said further animal studies at the University of Melbourne in support of the work at Hadassah were planned to begin by July 2011.

Immuron said the safety profile associated with its bovine colostrum platform technology suggested an ability to accelerate product to market.

Immuron was up 0.3 cents or 4.55 percent to 6.9 cents.

GIACONDA

Giaconda's administrator Nicholas Crouch of Crouch Amirbeaggi Insolvency Accountants, said the registered securities held by Redhill Biopharma had been released.

The administrators said the securities were "a first ranking fixed and floating charge over the entire assets and undertakings of the company and a first ranking fixed charge over certain intellectual property assets".

In August 2010, Giaconda sold its Myoconda, Heliconda and Picoconda patents to Israel's Redhill Biopharma for \$US500,000 plus seven percent of net sales that gave Redhill the charge over Giaconda's 78,373,505 shares (BD: Aug 17, 2011).

The administrators said the release was granted by Redhill after Giaconda founder Prof Thomas Borody paid \$37,916 to FB Rice & Co, the company's patent attorney, to satisfy Giaconda's obligation to pay the patent attorney fees associated with the transfer of ownership in the Myoconda, Heliconda, and Picoconda patents.

The administrators said Prof Borody made the payment on the condition that a loan to the company was repaid in full as part of the deed of company arrangement to be proposed by Minimum Risk Pty Ltd and submitted to the creditors at the second creditors meeting.

Giaconda is in a suspension and last traded at 3.4 cents.

SIGNOSTICS

Adelaide's Signostics says it has won the Melbourne Design Awards' best medical and scientific project award for its handheld Signos personal ultrasound system.

Signostics said the device was "the smallest and most affordable ultrasound device ever developed" and was designed for point-of-care use by medical practitioners.

The company said the Signos was worn around the user's neck or carried in their pocket and provided a quick way to visually assess a patient's internal anatomy.

Signostics chief operating officer Stewart Bartlett told Biotech Daily the display screen and separate probe were each about the size of a mobile or cell telephone and cost about \$5,000 each.

For more information go to: <http://www.signosticsmedical.com/>.

He said the system was available in Australia and Italy as well as the US for veterinary purposes.

Mr Bartlett said the Signos system was launched in May 2009 and his company was in discussions with European distributors, while he expected the company to direct market the system to US customers.

Signostics said the Melbourne Design Awards recognized design categories including building architecture, interior design, fashion, animation, automotive and medical products.

The company quoted the award judges saying the "ground-breaking, ultra compact portable ultrasound streamlines health services and extends the range of care offered by physicians, putting patients at ease via accurate on-the-spot diagnosis".

"The Signos is already receiving widespread endorsement from medical practitioners worldwide, including rural, respiratory and palliative care physicians, as well as physiotherapists," said Mr Bartlett.

Signostics was established in Adelaide in 2005 with a vision to be the world leader in fast and affordable point-of-care medical devices. After opening its sales and marketing office in Palo Alto, California, the company launched its first product into the veterinarian market in 2009 before gaining regulatory approvals to enter the human medical device market in Australia, the United States and Europe.

Signostics is a private company.

SOLAGRAN

Solagran says it has hired Siebelco Pty Ltd as its sales and marketing partner for the Siberian Red and Bioeffective Gel brands of its over-the-counter cure-all.

Solagran said its focus in Australia had been "in the backend of product development and clinical research to substantiate health claims for our unique actives".

The company said it would move from brand development of its conifer green needle extract to healthcare professionals and building over-the-counter brands in pharmacies.

Solagran said Siebelco had extensive sales and marketing expertise and its principals had built consumer brands in Australia and would initially target 1,000 of Australia's 5,500 pharmacies using a national sales force.

The company said Siebelco's founder Thomas Siebel had more than 31 years experience in the fast moving consumer goods sector as a retailer and a manufacturer and had been the general manager of Sakata Rice Snacks Australia and Herron Pharmaceuticals.

Solagran fell 0.3 cents or 3.1 percent to 9.3 cents.