BIOTECH NEWS

BIA welcomes faster NICE evaluation process

The BIA has welcomed the announcement by NICE that a new, shorter evaluation process is to be introduced to enable the faster development of guidance on new medicines for the NHS. Aisling Burnand, chief executive of the BIA, commented: "The delay caused by the current appraisal process seriously affects not only patients but also the research and development of innovative biotech medicines. The removal of any unnecessary delays that will accelerate the take-up of new medicines is welcomed by the industry. This will not only benefit patients today but will also provide a greater incentive for companies developing the life-saving treatments of the future. Equitable access to innovative treatments is a crucial issue and the BIA looks forward to contributing and cooperating with NICE during the consultation on details of the new process."

Cellcentric and Wolfson Institute collaborate on cancer drug discovery

CellCentric has formed a research collaboration with Professor Chris Boshoff of the Wolfson Institute of Biomedical Research, University College London to explore epigenetic-related cancer cell targets, linking CellCentric's core technologies to human cell models of the disease. The company says the collaboration will accelerate its discovery of novel treatments for cancer, and ultimately deliver breakthrough therapeutics.

Boshoff is Professor of Cancer Medicine at the Wolfson Institute. He is co-director of Cancer Research UK's Viral Oncology Group and chairman of the Wellcome Trust's Functional Genomics Initiative on Stem Cells.

KREATECH Biotechnology launches small RNA labelling kit

KREATECH Biotechnology has introduced the latest in a range of labelling kits for gene expression applications, the Small RNA Labeling Kit, which uses ULS labelling technology to directly label all sizes of naturally occurring nucleic acids without the need for enzymes. The small RNA labelling kit labels small RNAs such as miRNA or siRNA within 15 minutes in a one-step incubation. The kit provides users with the reagents necessary to label 20 micrograms of small RNA as well as the specially designed KREApure purification columns developed to specifically remove unreacted ULS reagent from the labelling reaction.

LANXESS to set up new custom manufacturing company

LANXESS's Fine Chemicals Business Unit is to have a new name, a new alignment and a new business model with the set-up of a new legally independent company. "From the second quarter of 2006 we shall offer our proven expertise in custom manufacturing to the global market in a separate mid-size company called Saltigo," said Dr Axel Westerhaus, head of the Fine Chemicals Business Unit. LANXESS's Fine Chemicals Business Unit already achieves more than 90 per cent of its sales with custom manufacturing, a purely service-oriented sector. In this field, Fine Chemicals had total sales in 2004 of almost €400 million.

Saltigo will be a wholly-owned subsidiary of LANXESS. According to Westerhaus, this gives the new company the financial strength and stability of having a big chemical player in the background and the benefit of backward integration where it makes sense.

The new name will bring with it a changed set-up. "To be successful in the project-oriented service business requires different structures from the ones we had when our primary aim was to serve other Bayer and, later, LANXESS divisions," stated Westerhaus.

The company said the first step will be to rapidly create favourable starting and framework conditions for Saltigo. This will mean closing unprofitable facilities. The goal is to have an equipment park that meets the actual demand of the market.

"We must reduce our production costs by around a quarter. Through this and other measures we shall manage to close the gap between our cost structure and that of our competitors," stated Westerhaus.

LANXESS is also helping to improve the enterprise's starting position. The parent company has set aside a capital investment of €50 million up to the end of 2007, with the option of a further €50 million investment up to 2010. LANXESS is confident that these measures will secure the global competitiveness of the company and safeguard jobs in Germany in the long term. Saltigo will primarily target customers of its three business lines: pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals and specialities.

"This type of business is not immediately under threat from producers in low-wage countries because it is dependent on intellectual property, reliability and full-service offers," said Westerhaus.

"We shall therefore increase our resources on the sales and marketing side, including personnel," he added.

Pictured is LANXESS's Central Organics Pilot Plant (ZeTO™) in which new products are developed and existing manufacturing processes optimised. The unit is used for process development and optimisation with respect to pharmaceuticals, agro and fine chemicals, and will form a core part of the operations of the new Saltigo custom manufacturing business.

CAT acquires Genencor oncology product candidates

Cambridge Antibody Technology (CAT) has acquired product candidates GCR-3888 and GCR-8015 from Genencor. GCR-3888 has shown efficacy in a Phase I clinical trial and is currently in a Phase II clinical trial for the treatment of hairy cell leukaemia (HCL). GCR-8015, an optimised version of GCR-3888, is in preclinical development as a potential treatment for B-cell malignancies including non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (NHL) and chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL). The candidates are both immunotoxins comprising an antibody fragment that targets the CD22 receptor on B-lymphocytes fused to a toxin molecule.

CAT has hired ten key former staff of Genencor who will continue to be responsible for the development of these programmes, and has thereby established a CAT operation in the USA for the first time. This will be based in Palo Alto, California.

CAT intends to file an IND application for GCR-8015 in various CD22 positive B-cell malignancies, including NHL and CLL, following a period of manufacturing development which is expected to be complete by the end of 2006 and to support the NCI's ongoing development of GCR-3888 in HCL and paediatric acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (pALL).

CIA welcomes European Parliament vote on REACH

The Chemical Industries Association (CIA) has welcomed the European Parliament's vote for a more workable and proportionate Registration package in the REACH regulations, but has expressed its concern that MEPs decided to base the Authorisation part of the system on hazard alone.

The Association said it was pleased that MEPs shared its view that the registration requirements should be less bureaucratic. It said that contrary to some pressure group fears, the industry will still test all 30,000 legacy substances to some degree but those posing greater risk will require and get more thorough testing.

However, the CIA said that for companies that manufacture and use reactive chemicals to make benign substances found in everyday products such as medicines and cleaning products, hazard-based authorisation means that many useful substances could be removed from the market, even when there is no risk to man or environment if those substances are used appropriately.

"Today's vote in the Parliament marks the first formal legislative milestone for REACH since this chemicals management debate started back in 1998 under the last UK Presidency of the EU," said Judith Hackitt, CIA's director general. "We hope the vote gives this 2005 UK Presidency the boost it needs to draw this phase of the debate to a close by the end of the year. Then we can all focus on preparing for REACH and delivering the environmental and health benefits all parties wish to see following its effective implementation".

In a further statement, Hackitt has stressed that embracing Sustainable Development is essential for the survival of the chemical industry and to ensuring its contribution to saving the planet. She said it offers "a tremendous opportunity for the industry to move out of its long-standing defensive mode and truly regain a place in society that we can be proud of".

Hackitt referred to the major, new independent studies to identify how the industry in the UK, and in Europe as a whole, can collectively improve its representation and advocacy on the key, cross-cutting issues such as public health or education. She described the UK study as a great chance to "make a further step change improvement in our representation".

Biologics Outsourcing - Final call for papers

The new Biologics Outsourcing conference being held at BioFine takes place from May 4-5, 2006 at the Palau de Congressos de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain. The conference is aimed at senior R&D, production and business executives in the biotech/biopharmaceutical sector addressing the latest technical and business issues in bioprocess research and biomanufacturing. Companies and organisations that have confirmed their presentations to date include Frost & Sullivan; Cambrex Biopharmacueticals; Avecia Biotechnology; Xenova; Boehringer Ingelheim; Dowpharma; Henogen SA; Biacore AB; Merck KGaA; and celares GmbH.

If you are interested in presenting a 30-45-minute paper at this meeting, please send a 200-word abstract describing your work to Tom Mulligan on tom@sp2.uk.com

For further information contact Tom Mulligan, Conference Director, avakado Conferences on Tel: +44-1403-220755 Fax: +44-1403-220761 Email: tom@sp2.uk.com

Codexis and Arch Pharmalabs in intermediate supply agreement

Codexis, Inc has signed a manufacturing and supply agreement with Arch Pharmalabs Ltd, an Indian generics pharmaceutical company, for a generic pharmaceutical intermediate. Arch will use a novel, cost-effective process developed using Codexis' biocatalytic technology platform to manufacture an undisclosed pharmaceutical compound.

The process uses Codexis' proprietary Molecular Breeding™ molecular evolution platform to produce pharmaceutical intermediates and active pharmaceutical ingredients at significantly lower cost and with fewer by-products and impurities than conventional methods. The process involves a biocatalytic system that has been specifically developed to function optimally for the synthesis of the pharmaceutical intermediate.

Codexis has granted Arch a non-exclusive licence to its proprietary biocatalytic system and will transfer the process to Arch in exchange for upfront and milestone payments. Codexis will supply Arch with the ThorougBred™ catalyst and Arch will manufacture the pharmaceutical intermediate. Codexis will directly market and sell the intermediate to the generic pharmaceutical industry.

"Codexis continues to expand its presence in the important Indian generics pharmaceutical industry with this agreement," said Alan Shaw, PhD, president and CEO of Codexis. "We are pleased to add Arch to our network of manufacturing partners, allowing Codexis to continue to focus on developing proprietary processes for high-value products and develop critical customer relationships. We look forward to working with Arch, adding value to their manufacturing processes with proven, cost-effective technology."

FDA and EU extend confidentiality arrangements

The FDA, the European Commission (EC), and the European Medicines Agency (EMEA) have extended their confidentiality arrangements related to medicinal products for human and veterinary use for five more years, following the positive experience gained since the initial arrangements were signed in September 2003.

The confidentiality arrangements allow the FDA and the EC/EMEA to exchange information as part of their regulatory processes. The types of information covered by the arrangements include legal and regulatory issues, scientific advice, orphan drug designation, inspection reports, marketing authorisation procedures, and post-marketing surveillance.

FDA names new Director for Office of Women's Health

The FDA has appointed Kathleen Uhl, MD, FAAFP, as the new Director of its Office of Women's Health (OWH). Dr Uhl, a Captain in the US Public Health Service, most recently served as a Supervisory Medical Officer in the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER).
Dr Uhl's experience includes clinical practice, basic science and clinical research, drug application review, drug safety oversight, and women's health issues. She is board certified in family medicine and is a fellow of The American Academy of Family Physicians. Additionally, she has dual faculty appointments at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS) in family and internal medicine. She also serves as a practising physician at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

She first joined the FDA in 1998 as a reviewer in the CDER's Office of Clinical Pharmacology and Biopharmaceutics, and later served as Deputy Division Director and Acting Division Director, Office of Post-Marketing Drug Risk Assessment. She has collaborated with the Office of Women's Health on a variety of FDA initiatives related to the inclusion of women and minorities in clinical trials and, more recently, served as reviewer and Supervisory Medical Officer in the CDER's Pregnancy and Lactation Labeling Team in the Office of New Drugs.

Dr Uhl received a Bachelor of Arts degree in chemistry from Temple University and the Doctor of Medicine from the Medical College of Pennsylvania. She joined the FDA following an internship and residency at Fort Benning, Georgia and fellowships at Walter Reed and USUHS.

BIOTECH NEWS

OncoMethylome Sciences raises €15 million in Series B round

Onco Methylome Sciences (OMS) has closed a €15 million Series B financing round. The proceeds will be used to accelerate the development of the company's diagnostic and pharmacogenomic solutions for early detection and individualised treatment of cancer. This latest Series B financing round brings the total capital raised by the company to date to €29.2 million.

Since its foundation in 2003, OncoMethylome Sciences has established a research and development organisation and has a network of clinical research collaborations with oncology institutions and companies in Europe and the USA, including John Hopkins University, Fox Chase Cancer Center and EXACT Sciences Corporation. The company's broad product pipeline is based on patent-protected DNA methylation technology, and covers major cancer indications that include prostate, colorectal, lung and breast cancer. Initial OncoMethylome Sciences products have been partnered for commercialisation with global partners such as Veridex LLC, a Johnson & Johnson company, and Chemicon International, a Serologicals company.

Genzyme acquires Cell Genesys' San Diego manufacturing operation

Genzyme has acquired Cell Genesys' manufacturing operation in San Diego, California to support the growth of its gene therapy programmes. Genzyme will pay Cell Genesys $3.2 million in cash for the assets contained in the 47,000 square foot leased facilities. Most of the approximately 40 employees formerly employed by Cell Genesys have become Genzyme employees.

Genzyme plans to use the acquired assets and the new facilities to support its ongoing research and clinical trials, and to broaden the company's manufacturing capabilities related to both Adenovirus and Adeno-Associated Virus vectors. These vectors are used to deliver genes to the appropriate cells in patients.

The most advanced gene therapy programme at Genzyme is an ongoing Phase II clinical trial examining the safety and effectiveness of locally delivered Ad2/HIF-1 alpha for patients with peripheral arterial disease. Genzyme's experimental therapy is designed to promote the growth of new blood vessels and improve circulation in limbs. Genzyme's gene therapy portfolio also includes preclinical work on lysosomal storage disorders and, in partnership with Excigen, Inc, atrial fibrillation.

North East Process Industry Cluster launched

The UK's North East Process Industry Cluster was officially launched at an event held in London last month. The organisation has more than 300 member companies from the region's chemical, pharmaceutical and bioscience sectors, and is the largest such cluster in the UK.

A recent survey by NEPIC among its members showed that international and UK banks and investors have £1 billion committed on current and near-future construction plans. Members in the region's expanding bioscience sector have asked NEPIC to help them recruit a further 1,000 skilled workers in the next 12 months.

NEPIC CEO Dr Stan Higgins said: "NEPIC members employ approximately 20 per cent of the region's workforce. Our sector is continuing to invest in new developments, plant and environmental improvements and we aim to be a unified voice in dialogue with government on issues including public investment in the region's roads, ports and airports, rising energy costs and addressing the skills shortage."

NEPIC has already met with UK Trade and Industry Secretary Alan Johnson and MPs from the region to press for continued improvement in roads, science education and skills training in line with a forecast of £4.5 billion of investment by NEPIC member companies in the region in the next five to ten years. The forecast was compiled in a review of projects currently at the planning and discussion stage among leading companies with production bases in the region.

Trade and Industry Secretary Johnson welcomed the formation of NEPIC to represent regional interests of chemical, pharmaceutical and biotech businesses employing over 200,000 people in the North East. He said: "The sector plays a vital role in our economy, particularly in the North East where it contributes 25 per cent of regional gross domestic product. The challenges and opportunities of today's globalised business community are great but by working together we can strengthen the industry, economy and society".

Trade and Industry Secretary Alan Johnson: "working together we can strengthen the industry, economy and society".

Merck KGaA reorganises pharmaceutical business in Japan

Merck KGaA is reorganising its pharmaceuticals business in Japan through the combination of the Ethicals division of Merck Ltd and the Japanese generic pharmaceuticals subsidiary Merck Hoei Ltd to form a new company, Merck Pharma Ltd, next April.

The company said the aim of the combination is to strengthen Merck's presence in Japan, the world's second-largest pharmaceutical market, and to exploit synergies from the previously separate organisations. Merck Pharma Ltd will be headquartered in Tokyo.

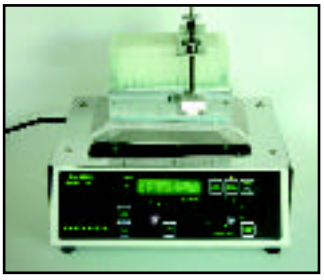
"By combining our previously separate ethical and generic pharmaceutical businesses into a new pharmaceutical organisation, Merck will be able to play a more important role in the Japanese pharmaceutical market," said Klaus Diehl, president of Merck Ltd Japan.

George H. Bush to speak at DCAT Annual Dinner

The speaker for the 80th DCAT Annual Dinner will be George Herbert Bush, the forty-first US President. The Dinner will take place on Thursday, March 23, 2006 during DCAT Week at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City. The appearance of George H. Bush will be the second time a US President has spoken at the DCAT Annual Dinner. Former President Bill Clinton was the guest speaker in 2003.

Zinsser introduces high-speed, low-noise vortexer

Zinsser Analytic has developed a special high-speed, low-noise vortexer, the DESYRE-Mix, to provide high-quality mixing for microtitre and deepwell plate applications from sample storage to chemical reactions. The mixing speed is up to 1,800 rpm and the vortex plate can be heated up to 150°C, making it highly suitable for applications in combinatorial chemistry. All functions are microprocessor controlled, and it is possible to link the DESYRE-Mix to a PC or integrate it into existing robotic enviroments through its RS 232 interface.
For further information visit: www.zinsser-analytic.com



DSM establishes new joint ventures in China

DSM, North China Pharmaceutical Group Corporation Ltd (NCPC) and NCPC ListCo, the listed affiliate of NCPC, and the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC) of Hebei Province, China have formed an agreement confirming the terms of further cooperation between NCPC and DSM and the establishment of two joint ventures in the areas of nutritional products and anti-infective products.

DSM will make a strategic investment in NCPC by obtaining a minority share in NCPC GroupCo. DSM also intends to acquire a minority stake in NCPC ListCo, an affiliate of NCPC. In addition, DSM will obtain a controlling interest in the two joint ventures, which will be based in Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province. Sales are expected to start at about $275 million per year. The total cash investment of DSM in the deal is $164 million. In addition the company will contribute to the joint ventures with technology and management capabilities. NCPC will bring into the joint ventures their existing factories producing Vitamin C and B12 and beta lactam antibiotics, as well as their marketing and sales force.

Peter Elverding, chairman of DSM's Managing Board, commented: "This is a major step for DSM in the context of Vision 2010 - Building on strengths. It serves three key strategic targets: strengthening our Nutritional Products as well as our Anti-Infectives portfolio and expanding our presence in the emerging China market. The overall strategic partnership with NCPC provides an accelerated growth path into the Chinese nutrition and pharma market and it will significantly contribute to our target of doubling sales in China to $1 billion in 2010."

Genevac introduces new sample drying applications report

Genevac has released a new application report that discusses the importance of closely monitoring sample drying processes and presents solutions to save time and prevent sample loss.

The applications report provides a background to the principles of vacuum evaporation and provides data illustrating how different factors affect speed of drying and loss of sample.
The report demonstrates how fixed-length drying methods typically are much slower than optimised procedures and with lower-molecular-weight organic molecules can lead to significant loss of the sample being dried. In addition, the report shows how using advanced dryness detection technology helps minimise sample loss by limiting the levels of vacuum and temperature used.

For a copy of the applications report *Advanced dryness detection for improved throughput and yield during evaporation* contact Genevac Ltd on

The EZ-2 centrifugal evaporator from Genevac.

Tel: +44-1473 240000 or
Email: info@genevac.com

NicOx extends research collaboration with Merck & Co

NicOx SA has extended its August, 2003 research collaboration agreement with Merck & Co, Inc to jointly evaluate selected proprietary NicOx nitric oxide-donating compounds in an undisclosed therapeutic area. While the research was initially focused on one class of compounds, the two companies have agreed to broaden the field of investigation based on joint preclinical work conducted to date. Additional preclinical studies will be initiated to identify potential lead candidates for development.

EVENTS

(Events organisers' contact details on page 12)

January 26-27, 2006
abc Technologies 2006
Basel Hilton Hotel, Basel, Switzerland
Organiser: Chemspeed Technologies

February 14-17, 2006
INFORMEX
Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida, USA
Organisers: SOCMA and CMP

February 22, 2006
Screening Europe
Prague, Czech Republic
Organiser: Select Conferences

March 12-15, 2006
7th Annual Florida Heterocyclic IUPAC-Sponsored Conference
J. Wayne Reitz Union, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, USA
Organiser: ARKAT USA, Inc

May 4-5, 2006
BioFine 2006
Palau de Congressos, Barcelona, Spain
Organiser: avakado

May 4-5, 2006
Biologics Outsourcing Conference
Palau de Congressos, Barcelona, Spain
Organiser: avakado

May 4-5, 2006
Industrial Biotransformations
Palau de Congressos, Barcelona, Spain
Organiser: Scientific Update

May 4-5, 2006
Synthetic Heterocyclic Chemistry
Palau de Congressos, Barcelona, Spain
Organiser: Scientific Update

May 14-17, 2006
SCIpharm 2006
Edinburgh, UK
Organiser: Society of Chemical Industry

September 7-8, 2006
BioFine USA
U.S. Grant Hotel, Downtown San Diego, USA
Organiser: avakado

September 17-21, 2006
Society for Biomolecular Sciences Annual Conference and Exhibition
Washington Convention & Trade Center, Seattle, Washington, USA
Organiser: Society for Biomolecular Sciences

More events on page 12

Taiwan Hopax expands fine chemical capacity

Taiwan Hopax Fine Chemicals is to build a fine chemical plant at Kaohsiung, Taiwan for completion in the second quarter of 2006. The unit will raise the current capacity by fivefold, exceeding 900 tonne/year for the company's two manufacturing sites combined. The expansion represents an investment of $20million in new cGMP facilities supplying the needs of the biotech and pharmaceutical sectors. In addition, Hopax Fine Chemicals division has moved to a new global operations building situated in the same complex as the new plant. Taiwan Hopax specialises in sulfonation compounds, biological buffers and detergents, polyurethanes, and chemicals for electroplating.

Xceleron in new supplier deal with GSK

Xceleron, a bioanalytical CRO specialising in accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS) services, has signed a further three-year preferred supplier agreement with GlaxoSmithKline in which Xceleron will provide support for GSK's bioanalytical AMS programme specifically for human metabolite profiling and the collection of mass balance data. Xceleron has been retained by GSK specifically to provide consultancy for further development of AMS analytical processes, for problem-solving and for back-up analytical capacity using its own AMS instrument.

GSK recently became the first pharmaceutical company to invest directly in the technique by buying two of its own AMS devices. GSK was one of the founding organisations behind Xceleron in 1997 and has been a client of the company ever since.

Other applications of AMS zeptotechnology include absolute bioavailability and microdosing studies, which provide key human clinical data much earlier than was before possible.

Excelsyn extends consultancy package through DACG agreement

Pharmaceutical and chemical services group Excelsyn has strengthened its management consulting package through an exclusive agreement with DACG Ltd to offer a solution for pharmaceutical and chemical organisations needing change management and training support for major IT system implementations such as SAP, Oracle, PeopleSoft, Siebel and JD Edwards programs. An accredited training provider of the Institute of IT Training, DACG has more than 200 staff in its London HQ and European offices. The business became an operating unit of Assima Ltd in May of this year.

The agreement with DACG is the latest in a series to expand Excelsyn's consultancy services package. It recently announced a formal agreement with the Jan Ramakers Fine Chemicals Consulting Group, which specialises in benchmarking and market analysis services across the life sciences sector.

SAFC Biosciences and ProBioGen in cell line engineering services agreement

SAFC Biosciences and ProBioGen have established a worldwide, non-exclusive agreement under which SAFC Biosciences will market ProBioGen's cell line engineering services for the development of high-titre cells for the production of biotherapeutics. The agreement expands SAFC Biosciences' process development offering for biopharmaceutical markets and ProBioGen's global sales marketing coverage.

ProBioGen specialises in cell line development, viral vectors and the manufacture of glycoproteins. Combined with the use of novel, inactivation-resistant promoters, the company's vector design and sequential double selection strategy allow the development of clone pools with high average cell-specific productivity. The company said that when combined with SAFC Biosciences' expertise in mammalian cell culture media development, total volumetric productivity could be achieved beyond that attainable using the individual technologies.

AM-Pharma completes €9 million finance round

AM-Pharma BV, a biopharmaceutical company engaged in the preclinical and early clinical development of novel compounds to treat infectious and inflammatory diseases, has completed a major B-financing round of €9 million. The company will employ the investment for advancing several of its development projects through Phase II clinical trials.

AM-Pharma's lead compounds have been acquired through Dutch academic institutions. Internal research efforts are primarily devoted to the development and further evaluation of new product candidates. The company is developing treatments for opportunistic fungal and bacterial infections, sepsis and ulcerative colon disease, offering products that address genuine unmet medical needs.

Advanced intermediates & APIs

created in a culture of innovation

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Inspiring Science

SAFC Pharma is an experienced cGMP provider of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients and advanced intermediates. Our extensive expertise in complex, multi-step organic synthesis opens new opportunities for our partners by developing innovative synthetic solutions for their material needs. Combine that experience with an extensive manufacturing base and a skilled project management team and you have a provider able to consistently deliver on time and to desired specifications. Ultimately, our unique brand of brilliance can accelerate and add value to your research, development and commercialization activities.

SAFC - your chance to shine.

EVENTS

October 3-5, 2006
CPhI Worldwide
Paris-Nord Villepinte, Paris, France
Organiser: CMP Information

Organisers' contact details

ARKAT USA, Inc
Web: www.arkat-usa.org

avakado
Contact: Mark Harrington or Jaymin Amin
Tel: +44 1403 220760
Email: mark@sp2.uk.com or jaymin@sp2.uk.com
Web: www.biofine.uk.com

Chemspeed Technologies
Contact: Joanne Blackwell
Tel: +41 61 816 9500
Fax: +41 61 816 9509
Email: joanne.blackwell@chemspeed.com
Web: www.abctechnologies.ch

CMP Information
Contact: Joke Ekelschot or Tom Faulkner
Tel: +31 346 559444
Fax: +31 346 573811
Email: tfaulkner@cmpinformation.com
Web: www.cphi.com

Scientific Update
Contact: Claire Francis
Tel: +44 1435 873062
Email: claire@scientificupdate.co.uk
Web: www.scientificupdate.co.uk

Select Conferences
Contact: Paul Raggett
Tel: +44 1787 315117
Email: r.sampson@selectconferences.com

Society of Chemical Industry
Contact: Laura Milne
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Fax: +44 20 7235 7743
Email: laura.milne@soci.org

Society for Biomolecular Sciences
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Fax: +1 203 748 7557
Email: mmanoni@sbsonline.org

SOCMA
Tel: +1 202 721 4100
Web: www.socma.com
Web: www.informex.com

Albany Molecular Research opens facilities in Singapore and India

Albany Molecular Research, Inc's wholly owned subsidiary, Albany Molecular Research Singapore Research Centre, Pte Ltd (AMRSRC), has moved into permanent laboratory facilities in Singapore. Earlier this year, the company established AMRSRC in temporary facilities while the new laboratories were under construction. In addition, AMRI's new facilities in Hyderabad, India are now operational.

In Singapore, AMRI's new state-of-the-art 16,000 square foot facility is located in Science Park III, near the Biopolis, Singapore's biomedical research hub. The facility can currently accommodate more than 50 scientists. Capabilities include medicinal chemistry support, custom synthesis of building blocks and scaffolds, and non-GMP scale up. AMRI has an additional 29,000 square feet of space in Singapore at this facility and currently plans to add laboratories for cGMP synthesis and analytical chemistry, as well as additional facilities for chemical synthesis.

The Albany Molecular Research Hyderabad Research Centre, Pvt Ltd (AMRHRC), a wholly owned subsidiary of the company, is located in the ICICI Knowledge Park near Hyderabad, India. The newly constructed laboratory accommodates up to 12 scientists and is being used for custom synthesis of scaffolds and building blocks, as well as preparation of reference standards. A second laboratory for preparing up to kilogram quantities of pharmaceutical intermediates, starting materials and other compounds is currently under construction and expected to be operational by early next year.

Reaxa establishes sales agreement with Umicore

Catalyst technologies company Reaxa has established a worldwide sales agreement with Umicore in which Umicore will represent Reaxa's EnCat™ catalysts and QuadraPure™ scavenging resins in process applications at commercial scale.

Umicore will promote Reaxa's products and services through its technical sales force operating from locations in Europe, the Americas and Asia. This agency complements the worlwide distribution of Reaxa products at laboratory scale in place with Sigma-Aldrich.

"Representation of our technologies into specific large-scale life science applications is a key element in our business development strategy," commented Reaxa CEO Dr Pete Jackson. "The agency agreement with Umicore makes this connection, with the added benefit of their widely-respected credentials in precious metal chemistry and catalysis."

Reaxa has further EnCat catalysts and QuadraPure resins in development for 2006, including nano-particulate metal zero hydrogenation catalysts, chiral catalysts and biocatalyst immobilisation.

Asynt obtains continuous flow hydrogenator distribution rights

Asynt has obtained UK and Scandinavian distribution rights for the Thales Nanotechnology H-Cube Continuous Flow Hydrogenator, the first continuous flow hydrogenation reactor on the market. Designed to address issues arising from traditional batch methods for heterogeneous hydrogenation, the H-Cube is compact (0.3 cubic metres), portable and designed to be used in a standard lab fume hood. Reactions at up to 100°C and up to 100 bar can be performed on milligram to multi-gram quantities.

Traditional methods require an external hydrogen source, but the H-Cube generates the required quantity of hydrogen internally via the electrolytic decomposition of water. Reaction parameters such as pressure, temperature, flow rate and hydrogen production can be easily controlled and monitored with a touch-screen panel. Coupled with HPLC technology, this means that minimal training is required and reductions are easier to perform.

The H-Cube works by passing the reaction mixture through a flow channel, mixing it with the hydrogen gas at a desired pressure. This mixture is then heated prior to its passage through the catalyst cartridge. This purpose-designed, disposable cartridge, the CatCart™, improves safety and usability, eliminating the need for further filtration, thus avoiding the subsequent hazards attached. A large range of catalysts is also available allowing an extensive range of reactions to be performed. Working in such flow channels facilitates fast reaction optimisation and the opportunity for automation. Further information: www.asynt.com

CarboGen and AMCIS in chromatograhpy software collaboration with ETH

CarboGen and AMCIS have initiated a collaborative effort with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETH) to develop a software system for the simulation, design and optimisation of Simulated Moving Bed (SMB) chromatography.

The programme focuses on the optimisation of SMB separations, and the creation of model parameters for the design of experiments, with the aim of delivering significant improvements in development time and productivity. One objective is to save time during plant start-up by identifying in a more efficient and faster way good operating parameters leading to high product purities.

In addition, the improved productivity will lead to a shorter separation time and lower overall solvent consumption.

Chemtura's AXION organometallics brand approved under Madrid Protocol

Chemtura Corporation's organometallic specialities have been approved for sale in Europe under the AXION registered trademark under the Madrid Protocol. The AXION range comprises a large number of organometallic catalysts and compounds for the acceleration of chemical synthesis of APIs. The products include aluminium, boron, magnesium, tin, titanium, zinc and zirconium compounds. The company's technical specialists can assist in customising AXION chemistries for individual applications.

Chemtura was formed through the merger earlier this year of Crompton Corporation and Great Lakes Chemical Company, and has sales of $3.7 billion from speciality chemicals, crop protection and biocidal products.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Stephen Mathews

Pharmacogenetics company Lab21 has appointed **Stephen Mathews** to head up its Pharmaceutical and Biotech Business Development team. Founded in April this year, Lab21 provides technically advanced laboratory services including molecular and viral diagnostics, such as viral load and resistance profiling, plus pharmacogenetic (PGx) and patient-profiling tests such as Cytochrome P450.

SAFC has made two key appointments at its Gillingham, UK intermediates manufacturing facility: **Mojmir Vavrecka** has been named as site director and **Marc Willuhn** as development manager. Vavrecka had been head of chemical production at the company's production site in Buchs, Switzerland since early 2000 and previously served with Roche in Basel, Switzerland. He holds a PhD in Chemistry from Zurich University. Willuhn joined SAFC at its site in Manchester, UK in early 2005, following four years with Schering AG, Berlin, Germany as laboratory head and project leader. He holds a PhD in Organic Chemistry from Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany.

Chemistry services company Charnwood Molecular Ltd has appointed **Dr Stella Leigh James** as business development manager in charge of European operations. She holds an MSc in Medicinal Chemistry and studied for her PhD in Organic Chemistry under the supervision of Dr Steve Allin at Loughborough University. She joined Charnwood Molecular Ltd in 2002 as a research chemist and has worked on a wide range of projects in custom synthesis and contract research. Prior to joining Charnwood Molecular Ltd she spent 12 months working in Germany at DECHEMA eV, and was a CASE student at GSK Harlow for three months.

Patrick O'Connor, PhD, FRCP (Edin.) has been appointed as managing director and head of clinical development at Celtic Pharma Development Services Ltd, the development arm of Celtic Pharmaceutical Holdings LP. Dr O'Connor most recently served as senior vice president, clinical research & development at Ferring Pharmaceuticals Inc, where he was responsible for global clinical development. Dr O'Connor has been responsible for the development and approval of more than 20 compounds in both the USA and Europe. After graduating in medicine, Dr O'Connor spent four years in basic physiology/pharmacology research at Manchester University in the UK leading to a PhD and then worked for ten years in the UK National Health Service. He is a registered specialist in the UK, with accreditation in internal medicine and clinical pharmacology.

Encysive Pharmaceuticals has appointed **George W. Cole** as chief operating officer (COO), a new position within the company. As COO, Cole will oversee worldwide marketing and sales operations, and manufacturing in support of the anticipated launch of Thelin (sitaxsentan sodium) in 2006. He will report directly to **Bruce D. Given, MD,** Encysive's president and chief executive officer. Cole previously served for more than 10 years in senior management roles with Altana Pharma US, a subsidiary of the German-based pharmaceutical company Altana Pharma AG. During his tenure, he served as president of the company's branded and generic businesses, as well as chairman of Altana's global operating committee. He led Altana in building its own clinical development and regulatory affairs divisions, and strengthened the company's marketing capabilities in the USA. Prior to joining Altana, Cole was vice president, sales and marketing for Savage Laboratories, a division of Altana, Inc. He holds an MBA from the University of Evansville and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Pharmacy from the University of Louisiana. He is also a board member of the National Pharmaceutical Council and the Health Institute of New Jersey.

BOOKWORM

Reviews of scientific, technical and business management publications.

Hydrolases in Organic Synthesis: Regio- and Stereoselective Biotransformations, by Uwe Theo Bornscheuer and Romas Joseph Kazlauskas, pub Wiley-VCH. Hardback, 368 pages. ISBN: 3-5273-1029-0. Price: €139.00.
The second edition of this publication reviews recent developments in the use of hydrolases for organic synthesis and gives an overview of stereoselective reactions of these enzymes. It is especially detailed in its coverage of lipases, esterases and proteases. The publication contains over one thousand chemical structures and 1,800 references.
Web: www.wiley-vch.de

Protein-Protein Interactions: A Molecular Cloning Manual, by Erica Golemis and Peter Adams, pub Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press. Paperback, 820 pages. ISBN: 0-8796-9723-7. Price: $220.00.
This is an updated edition of a manual that provides a thorough collection of the technical and theoretical issues related to the study of protein associations, including standard methods, biophysical approaches and, in the final section of the manual, a collection of computational methods for integrating and analysing interactions.
Web: www.cshlpress.com

The Molecular Biology of Cancer, eds Stella Pelengaris and Michael Khan, pub Blackwell Publishing. Paperback, 576 pages. ISBN: 1-4051-1814-8. Price: $74.95.
This comprehensive publication gives a detailed description of the molecular mechanisms involved in the development of cancer and in its treatment. It discusses all aspects of cancer biology from causes, development and diagnosis through to the treatment of the disease. The book is an excellent text for students of upper-level courses in the biology of cancer and for researchers in the field.
Web: www.blackwellpublishing.com

Glossary of Biotechnology and Nanobiotechnology Terms, by Kimball R. Nill, pub CRC Press. Hardback, 424 pages. ISBN: 0-8493-6609-7. Price: $80.96.
This glossary provides concise definitions of terms for persons unfamiliar with biotechnology and nanobiotechnology, and clarifies new terms and how they are used. Newly revised and expanded, the book now includes those nanotechnology terms relevant to biotechnology. It is extremely useful for anyone involved in the biotechnology field or anyone who deals with professionals in biotechnology.
Web: www.crcpress.com