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PRESS RELEASE

June 18, 2007

PhoenixBio Co., Ltd.

Launch of Contract Study Services for Anti-Hepatitis C Virus Drugs Using Chimeric Mice with Humanized Liver

PhoenixBio Co., Ltd. (Higashi-Hiroshima, Japan) with a proprietary chimeric mouse (PXB Mouse) technology has announced its launch of in vivo drug efficacy contract study services on anti-hepatitis C virus drugs with PXB mice.

Prior to the announcement, PhoenixBio had acquired a worldwide nonexclusive patent license from KMT Hepatech Inc. (Edmonton, Canada). The KMT patents relate to the use of HCV-infected immunodeficient and liver-failure mice with human hepatocytes as an animal model for anti-HCV drug efficacy evaluation.

There are 170 million people in the world who have been infected by HCV. Even though a hepatitis C screening has become a standard procedure before blood transfusions and the spreading of the virus has halted, numerous carriers who had already been infected may develop liver cirrhosis or liver cancer over time. A known and valid method for treating chronic hepatitis and liver cirrhosis is the constant reduction of the viral load in blood. Currently *interferon*, the *pegylated interferon* and *ribavirin* and combinations thereof are being used. However, there are many cases where the therapy with these drugs proves fruitless for the patient and pharmaceutical companies all over the world are working on more effective anti-HCV drugs.

The fact that HCV-infectiousness is highly species specific constitutes a major hurdle for the development of anti-HCV drugs, because only chimpanzees that resemble humans can be used as research animals. Chimpanzees are protected by the Washington Convention which makes their use as research animals very difficult.

The use of PXB mice for in vivo HCV and HVB studies has been validated by many researchers, and their findings on virus reproduction mechanisms, evaluation of infectiousness and receptivity to anti HCV drugs like interferon have been published at academic conferences and journals inside and outside of Japan.

The PXB mice are not only limited to infection and amplification studies on HCV, but also can be used to predict human pharmacokinetics in metabolism and excretion, due to the high replacement of human hepatocytes (>70%). Therefore the PXB mice are the most suitable animal model for anti-HCV drug development.

Please send any questions related to this press release to:

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