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NEWS RELEASE

## **Lentigen And Dharmacon Collaborate To Develop Custom Lentiviral Reagents For RNAi Research**

**BALTIMORE, MD and LAFAYETTE, CO**, August 30, 2006 – Lentigen Corporation and Dharmacon, Inc. announced today a multi-year collaboration to develop and manufacture lentiviral expression reagents to deliver short hairpin RNA (shRNA) expression vectors into cells using RNA interference (RNAi) mediated gene silencing. shRNA is useful where long-term gene suppression is required, or where the cells are resistant to other delivery methods. Its use, however, has been limited by lack of design and processing methods that provide reliable and reproducible gene silencing. The goal of the collaboration is to overcome those obstacles and create commercially available, reliable, efficient lentiviral reagents for RNAi research.

The collaboration will utilize Dharmacon's expertise in designing potent and specific gene silencing reagents combined with Lentigen's high-titer LentiMax™ vector system to develop the new lentiviral particles. Under the terms of the agreement, resulting products will be commercialized by Dharmacon and manufactured by Lentigen.

“Lentiviral shRNA expression technology is highly complementary to siRNA-based silencing and we believe our collaboration with Lentigen will result in efficient and reproducible gene silencing using shRNA,” said William S. Marshall, Ph.D., vice president of technology and business development for Fisher Biosciences. “Lentigen has world-leading technology in high-titer lentiviral vector development, and we are pleased to be pairing its capabilities with our RNAi expertise.”

Lentiviral vectors (LV) are vehicles that can deliver genetic material into cells with up to 100% stable gene transfer efficiency. By comparison, other expression systems such as non-viral, retroviral, adenoviral and adeno-associated viral vectors lack these desirable properties. In the field of RNAi, lentiviral delivery will supplement the chemical and mechanical delivery systems commonly used with siRNA by efficiently creating cell lines that stably express RNAi. Such cell lines have broad utility in research, from functional genomics to target validation and drug discovery, among other applications.

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Dr. Boro Dropulic, Founder and CEO of Lentigen, remarked, “Given Dharmacon’s highly regarded reputation in the development of RNAi products, we are quite honored to collaborate in this endeavor. By linking two industry leaders, we will be in a strong position to create and commercialize highly advanced and robust RNAi products for scientists. We look forward to working with Dharmacon to provide scientists the most efficient method possible to stably deliver and express RNAi in cells.”

Gene silencing using lentiviral reagents is accomplished by the binding and fusing of the LV pseudotyped envelope protein to the target cell membrane. The LV RNA containing the shRNA sequence is then delivered into the cell and a DNA complex is created via reverse transcription. This complex enters the target cell nucleus incorporating into the chromosomal DNA creating a stable molecule. The shRNA sequence is integrated in the chromosome and copied along with the target cell’s DNA during ongoing cell division.

#### **About Lentigen Corporation**

Lentigen Corporation is a privately owned biotechnology company focused on the manufacturing and development of lentiviral vectors using its proprietary gene delivery technology for a wide range of applications in biotechnology and medicine. Lentiviral vectors are highly adapted delivery vehicles that can transport genes or gene silencing sequences into cells with high efficiency and stability. Lentigen is positioning itself to become the leading provider of Lentiviral vector products and services for academic, government, biotechnology and pharmaceutical researchers. For further information, visit [www.Lentigen.com](http://www.Lentigen.com).

#### **About Dharmacon**

Dharmacon is a business unit within the Fisher Biosciences group and the world's leading provider of reliable, high quality RNA oligonucleotides, small interfering RNA (siRNA) and related RNA-interference (RNAi) products and technologies. Using its core expertise in chemistry, biology, bioinformatics and production, Dharmacon has developed industry-leading siRNA design, chemical modification, and delivery technologies for maximizing the efficiency of gene silencing. Dharmacon’s proprietary *SMART*selection™ and *SMART*pool® technologies result in potent and specific gene-silencing agents that can accelerate life-science research and drug discovery. Dharmacon’s *siGENOME*™, a comprehensive and flexible siRNA collection, offers guaranteed silencing reagents for all unique human, mouse and rat genes. The company's advanced siRNA modification technologies further enhance silencing specificity, stability, and *in vivo* performance. For more information about Dharmacon products and services visit [www.dharmacon.com](http://www.dharmacon.com) or call 303-604-9499.

### **About Fisher Biosciences**

Fisher Biosciences, a unit of Fisher Scientific International Inc. (*NYSE: FSH*), manufactures and supplies a wide range of products and services across the general-chemistry and life-sciences arenas. From fine and high-purity chemicals, clinical diagnostics, proprietary protein-research and cell-culture products, and sterile-liquid-handling systems, to innovative RNA-interference technology and high content screening, Fisher Biosciences serves scientific-research, healthcare, drug-discovery, and general industrial customers around the world. For more information please visit [www.fisherbiosci.com](http://www.fisherbiosci.com).

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