Rosetta Green and Iowa State University Research Foundation, Inc. sign a License Agreement for Developing Plants resistant to Nematodes

- Rosetta Green and Iowa State University Research Foundation, the licensing arm of Iowa State University, one of the leading universities for plant research, signed a license agreement to develop Nematode resistant plants.
- Nematodes are parasitic worms which usually attack the roots of plants causing immense damage.
- In soybean plants alone Nematodes cause damages estimated at $1.5 billion dollars a year in the US.

Rehovot, Israel – 14 August, 2012 – Rosetta Green Ltd. (TASE:RSTG), which develops improved crop traits for the agriculture and alternative fuel industries, and Iowa State University Research Foundation, the licensing arm of Iowa State University, one of the leading universities for plant research, signed a licensing agreement for a microRNA gene that has potential to improve resistance of plants to Nematodes.

According to the agreement, Rosetta Green will use its unique technology to introduce the licensed microRNA gene in plants. Financial terms of the agreement have not been disclosed.

The scientists at Iowa State University discovered that a microRNA gene can be used to produce nematode-resistant plants. Nematodes are microscopic, parasitic worms that penetrate into the roots' cells and are nourished from the cells' metabolites. The nematode grows to gigantic sizes inside the root and hijacks the plant, so that rather than absorbing nutrients from the ground and transferring energy to the plant to produce yield and fruits, the plant is forced to "work" for the nematode.
and nourish it. As a result, the plant is significantly weakened, struggles to fight against diseases, and its yield is reduced dramatically.

In recent years, as part of the Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement linked to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and war against greenhouse effect and environmental pollution, the use of many chemicals (such as methyl bromide) which were used for many years to fight nematodes was forbidden. Therefore the number of nematodes has quickly increased and causes huge damages to crops.

The fight against nematodes and the search for new ways to avoid the damages caused by them are rated at the top of the product pipeline of the multinational chemical companies and it is estimated that a new generation of chemicals to fight nematodes will be sold at approximately one billion dollars annually.

The results of the research performed at Iowa State University are dramatic. By changing a microRNA gene in the plant, the number of developing nematodes in the plant was reduced by half and the plant managed to better resist them, this without any use of external chemicals. Rosetta Green, the pioneer and leader in plant microRNA research, believes that it can advance these results and develop improved plants which will contain the relevant gene and be resistant to nematodes.

Mr. Amir Avniel, Rosetta Green's CEO said: "this is another significant milestone for the company in entering the plant disease world. Nematode worms are an increasing world wide problem due to the lack of measures against this pest. We see once again the potential of microRNA genes to improve plant traits. We believe that the technology developed by Iowa State University together with the technology developed by Rosetta Green related to these special genes creates a tremendous value and brings the technology closer to the market."

Professor Thomas Baum, a world known researcher of Nematodes whose laboratory discovered the ability of microRNA genes to fight nematodes added: “the scientific discovery that microRNA genes can improve the plants' resistance to nematodes is a breakthrough. Using microRNA genes in plants has the potential to increase yield and to provide an effective management tool against nematodes. This is the first time in the world that microRNAs have been proven as an effective tool to fight nematodes and I have high hopes that joint research between Iowa State University and Rosetta Gren will succeed in developing plants resistant to nematodes.”
About Rosetta Green

Rosetta Green (TASE:RSTG) is an Israeli agro-biotechnology company specializing in developing improved plants to the agriculture industry using the unique technology of microRNA genes. The company has developed technological platforms for the identification and utilization of microRNAs. These microRNA genes possess the potential to improve key traits in important plants such as corn, wheat, rice, soybean, and more. Rosetta Green’s product development pipeline already consists of plants with improved traits including drought tolerance, increased yield production, disease resistance and more. For additional information please visit Rosetta Green’s website at: www.rosettagreen.com.

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