

PetMedix agrees animal antibody discovery alliance with US giant

Animal health is set for a dramatic transformation thanks to a transatlantic collaboration between PetMedix in Cambridge and global leader Zoetis, anchored in New Jersey.

The tie-up is designed to develop novel, fully species-specific companion animal monoclonal antibody therapeutics (mAbs) using PetMedix's proprietary transgenic platforms.

PetMedix will undertake discovery activities against a number of key targets while Zoetis has an exclusive option to develop and bring these therapies to market.

Having commercialised three novel mAbs to date, Zoetis is a leader in companion animal antibody therapeutics, including fully species-specific antibodies.

The company's end-to-end R & D expertise in veterinary antibody therapeutics coupled with its manufacturing, sales and marketing scale and success makes it a strong partner for PetMedix.

PetMedix brings to the table its strengths in antibody discovery, thanks to the combination of its proprietary transgenic platforms and its team of nearly 50 world-class scientists at its labs in Cambridge UK.

Dr Tom Weaver, CEO of PetMedix, said: "We are excited to be partnering with Zoetis. Bringing together our unique pet antibody discovery engine with their proven ability to not just develop antibodies but also make them a commercial success, is set to be a winning combination.

"PetMedix's mission is to elevate expectations in pet care,

and we feel that this collaboration is another step towards that.”

While many technologies have been used to develop human therapeutic antibodies, 40 years of research has shown the benefits of antibodies that are 100 per cent species-matched to the patient.

Of the two most prevalent technologies to develop fully human antibodies – transgenic rodent platforms and phage display – the transgenic-based methods have yielded many more approved therapeutics in spite of being the newer technology.

Looking at the ‘blockbuster’ potential, monoclonal antibodies from transgenic platforms have also been significantly more commercially successful in human medicine with 10 transgenic mAbs exceeding \$1 billion in sales in 2020 compared to just two phage mAbs in the same period.

PetMedix is looking to build on this success for companion animals. Its Ky9™ and Felyne™ platforms are designed in the same way as the gold-standard human transgenic platforms, such as the IntelliSelect™ platform of Kymab (now a Sanofi company) and the Velocimmune™ platform of Regeneron.

This discovery collaboration with PetMedix marks the third publicly announced deal that Zoetis has done with companies using transgenic platforms for antibody discovery, with PetMedix providing a novel technology designed specifically for canine and feline antibodies.

This collaboration with Zoetis, alongside one announced in January 2021 with Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health, form part of PetMedix’s long term strategy for bringing transformative new therapies to market.

PetMedix has an extensive internal pipeline, discovered in house using its proprietary platforms and is seeking the best routes to get these novel medicines into the hands of vets.

- A Fortune 500 company, Zoetis generated revenue of \$6.7 billion in 2020 with approximately 11,300 employees.