

EMBARGOED UNTIL 5 A.M. EDT, July 11, 2007

**SYNTHETIC GENOMICS INC AND ASIATIC CENTRE FOR GENOME
TECHNOLOGY FORM PARTNERSHIP TO SEQUENCE OIL PALM
GENOME**

Deal should enable improved yields and lessen the environmental impact of oil palm

ROCKVILLE, MARLAND, U.S.A. AND KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, July 11, 2007 – Synthetic Genomics Inc., a privately-held company dedicated to commercializing synthetic genomic processes and naturally occurring processes for alternative energy solutions, and Asiatic Centre for Genome Technology Sdn Bhd (ACGT), a center that focuses on the application of genome technology to improve oil palm and other crops, today announced a multi-year, research and development joint venture to sequence and analyze the oil palm genome. ACGT is a wholly owned subsidiary of Asiatic Development Berhad, an oil palm plantation company listed on Bursa Malaysia (Malaysian Stock Exchange) and a member of Genting Group.

ACGT and its parent company's chairman and chief executive, Tan Sri Lim Kok Thay, made equity investments in Synthetic Genomics as part of the deal. Financial details were not disclosed.

"Increasing global demand for non-renewable fossil fuels is contributing to climate change and unsustainable development," explains J. Craig Venter, Ph.D., founder, chairman and chief executive officer of Synthetic Genomics. "Biofuels derived from oilseed plants by using genomic tools are a promising alternative that could alleviate our reliance on fossil fuels if they can be used in an environmentally sound way. We look forward to working with ACGT to advance the use of these energy crops."

The first phase of the agreement focuses on oil palm. Synthetic Genomics will conduct in-depth genomic analyses of the oil palm genome and this will represent the first full analysis of the oil palm genome. In subsequent studies the groups will also analyze the oil palm's root and leaf microbial communities, to identify biomarkers and metabolic pathways that affect the plants growth and viability.

Oil palm is one of the most productive oilseed crops and is used in a wide variety of ways worldwide including in food and for fuels. However, oil palm's promise as a clean energy source has not yet been fully realized. Synthetic Genomics and ACGT believe that by understanding the oil palm's genome, the groups can enable palm oil to be a better source of renewable fuel by breeding plants with useful traits. These include: traits that enable the plant to be grown in more arid locations and the development of plants with high oil yield and low height increment. Synthetic Genomics and ACGT will also develop diagnostic tests for plant diseases that enhance natural resistance mechanisms for the breeding and maintenance of disease resistant energy crops. The resulting genomic solutions will help address the ecological concerns on biodiversity destruction through more efficient use of land with higher agricultural yield as well as sustainable development with improved stewardship of the plantation environment.

“We are eager to work with Synthetic Genomics as it opens up a new horizon in oil palm research which will result in unprecedented understanding of the oil palm and its surroundings and we are confident it will significantly increase oil palm’s productivity and competitive advantage,” said Tan Sri Lim Kok Thay, Chief Executive of Asiatic. “Our partnership consists of a world class scientific team with expertise in molecular biology, metagenomics, metabolic engineering, chemistry, plant science and agronomy who can greatly improve the selection and breeding of oil palm.”

About Synthetic Genomics Inc.

Synthetic Genomics Inc., a privately-held company founded in 2005 and located in Rockville, Maryland and La Jolla, California, is dedicated to developing and commercializing synthetic genomic processes and naturally occurring processes for the production of clean, renewable alternative energy solutions. Recent advances in the field of synthetic genomics present seemingly limitless applications that could revolutionize production of energy, chemicals and pharmaceuticals and enable carbon sequestration and environmental remediation. For more information, visit www.syntheticgenomics.com.

About Asiatic Development Berhad

Asiatic Development Berhad (“Asiatic”), a 55%-owned subsidiary of Genting Berhad, commenced its operations in 1980 as the plantation arm of the Genting Group. Over the years, the Asiatic Group had embarked on several significant acquisitions in Malaysia, thus increasing its land bank from a mere 13,700 hectares in 1980 to nearly 66,000 hectares currently. In line with its long term strategy, the Asiatic Group had, in June 2005, further expanded its operations to Indonesia, on a joint venture basis, to develop some 98,300 hectares. The Asiatic Group also owns 5 oil mills with a total milling capacity of 235 tonnes per hour and is reputed to be one of the lowest cost palm oil producers with fresh fruit bunches production of over one million tonnes. For more information, visit www.asiatic.com.my.

Media Contacts

Melanie Wranaker
Synthetic Genomics Inc.
240-238-0808
mwranaker@syntheticgenomics.com

Heather Kowalski
Kowalski Communications
202-294-9206
hkowalski@kowalskicomcommunications.com

###

EMBARGOED UNTIL 5 A.M. EDT, July 11, 2007

THE J. CRAIG VENTER INSTITUTE TO AID ASIATIC CENTRE FOR GENOME TECHNOLOGY TO ESTABLISH NEW GENOMICS FACILITY

The program will also provide for in-depth training of Malaysian scientists on new tools and techniques of genomics

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND, U.S.A. AND KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, July 11, 2007 – The J. Craig Venter Institute (JCVI) today announced an agreement with the Asiatic Centre for Genome Technology Sdn Bhd (ACGT), a center that focuses on the application of genome technology to improve oil palm and other crops, to help ACGT establish a new genomics research facility in Malaysia. The JCVI will also provide hands-on training for Malaysian scientists.

“As part of the Venter Institute’s mission to advance the science of genomics through education and training worldwide, we are excited to work with ACGT to build their new genomics facility,” explains J. Craig Venter, Ph.D., chairman and president of JCVI. “Genomics holds the key to solve so many worldwide issues including developing new sources of cleaner energy. Coupling our knowledge and expertise about genomics with ACGT’s expertise in the oil palm should enable the scientists of Malaysia to become leaders in this promising field.”

Through the agreement JCVI will help ACGT establish a state-of-the-art genomics research facility, develop standard operating procedures, and will provide other technical assistance for the genomics center. In November 2006 ACGT was awarded the BioNexus Status by Malaysian Biotechnology Corporation Sdn Bhd (BiotechCorp), a government agency under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) set up to promote and accelerate the biotechnology industrial development in the country.

ACGT is led by Dr Cheah Suan Choo, a recognized Malaysian oil palm genomics expert who is credited as co-inventor of three patents on oil palm genes and genetic markers. ACGT established a laboratory at the Technology Park Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur early this month and has begun its research and development activities. ACGT is a wholly owned subsidiary of Asiatic Development Berhad, an oil palm plantation company listed on Bursa Malaysia (Malaysian Stock Exchange) and a member of Genting Group.

“This collaboration is an international effort to create a platform for training and developing Malaysian scientists in the field of high-throughput genomic sequencing and bioinformatics,” said Tan Sri Lim Kok Thay, Chief Executive of Asiatic. “We are confident that the development of such expertise will expedite ACGT’s efforts to improve the productivity of oil palm and other crops.”

About the J. Craig Venter Institute

The J. Craig Venter Institute is a not-for-profit research institute dedicated to the advancement of the science of genomics; the understanding of its implications for society; and communication of those results to the scientific community, the public, and policymakers. Founded by J. Craig Venter, Ph.D., the JCVI is home to approximately 500 scientists and staff with expertise in human and evolutionary biology, genetics, bioinformatics/informatics, information technology, high-throughput DNA sequencing, genomic and environmental policy research, and public education in science and science policy. The legacy organizations of the JCVI are: The Institute for Genomic Research (TIGR), The Center for the Advancement of Genomics (TCAG), the Institute for Biological Energy Alternatives (IBEA), the Joint Technology Center (JTC), and the J. Craig Venter Science Foundation. The JCVI is a 501 (c) (3) organization. For additional information, please visit <http://www.JCVI.org>.

About Asiatic Development Berhad

Asiatic Development Berhad (“Asiatic”), a 55%-owned subsidiary of Genting Berhad, commenced its operations in 1980 as the plantation arm of the Genting Group. Over the years, the Asiatic Group had embarked on several significant acquisitions in Malaysia, thus increasing its land bank from a mere 13,700 hectares in 1980 to nearly 66,000 hectares currently. In line with its long term strategy, the Asiatic Group had, in June 2005, further expanded its operations to Indonesia, on a joint venture basis, to develop some 98,300 hectares. The Asiatic Group also owns 5 oil mills with a total milling capacity of 235 tonnes per hour and is reputed to be one of the lowest cost palm oil producers with fresh fruit bunches production of over one million tonnes. For more information, visit www.asiatic.com.my

Media Contacts

JCVI

Heather Kowalski

Kowalski Communications

202-294-9206

hkowalski@kowalskicomcommunications.com

Asiatic/ACGT

Tan Wee Kok

Asiatic Development Berhad

(603)-23336572

weekok.tan@asiatic.com.my