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ASURAGEN enters into Licensing Agreement with Yale for Therapeutic Use of let-7 miRNA

Austin, Texas, January 9, 2007 –Asuragen Inc. (“Asuragen”) announced today that it recently entered into a license agreement with Yale University for exclusive access to rights in inventions developed by Dr. Frank Slack for the regulation of oncogenes by microRNA's.

Dr. Slack's inventions derive from his efforts to characterize the microRNA let-7 in both mammalian and non-mammalian organisms. Dr. Slack discovered that among the genes regulated by let-7 in the nematode *C. elegans*, there are several genes related to cancer including the homolog of the human oncogene, *ras*. A collaboration between scientists in the Slack laboratory and at Asuragen revealed that human let-7 regulates the expression of *ras* and that mis-regulation of let-7 in human lung cells likely contributes to the development of lung cancer via altered expression of *ras*.

A number of recent microRNA discoveries, including those by Dr. Slack, have potential clinical implications. “Our hope is that we can use let-7 as a potential diagnostic tool to diagnose lung cancers in patients,” Slack said. “And, secondly, potentially use let-7 as a way to knock out activated *ras* in those lung cancers.”

MicroRNAs (miRNAs) are a recently identified class of cellular RNAs that regulate protein expression at the translational level. The active, mature miRNAs are 17–24 base, single-stranded RNA molecules expressed in eukaryotic cells and are known to affect the translation or stability of target messenger RNAs. Each microRNA is believed to regulate multiple genes, with predictions that greater than one third of all human genes may be regulated by miRNA molecules.

“By taking this license, Asuragen continues to strengthen its position as the leader in the application of miRNAs for diagnostics and therapeutics”, states Matt Winkler, CEO/CSO of Asuragen. “We believe that recent advances in the application of siRNAs and the acquisition of Sirna Therapeutics by Merck & Co., confirms that RNA chemistries are overcoming previous clinical hurdles and sets the stage for potential miRNA therapeutic applications.”

In addition to the exclusive license agreement, Asuragen has also entered into a sponsored research agreement with Dr. Slack to fund his miRNA research.

About Asuragen, Inc.

Asuragen, Inc. is a newly formed company that resulted from the sale in March 2006 of the Research Products Division of Ambion, Inc. to Applied Biosystems Group (NYSE: ABI). Asuragen comprises the former Diagnostics and Services divisions of Ambion, Diagnostics and Services, as well as a Discovery group dedicated to developing new technologies that can be used in cutting edge clinical products. Comprised of over 115 employees, Asuragen is a fully integrated molecular diagnostic company focused on molecular oncology and early detection of cancer, with emphasis on microRNAs.

Asuragen's current product portfolio consists of Signature® Genetic Testing and Oncology Testing products, as well as industry leading controls and standards engineered using its patented Armored RNA® Technology. Asuragen has recently formed a partnership with Digene Corporation (NASDAQ: DIGE) to market and distribute its Signature Cystic Fibrosis screening products.

Asuragen's Molecular Biology Service group is the biomarker discovery engine for the company with a strong focus around microRNA. It also offers a range of molecular biology services to biotechnology and pharmaceutical

companies including microRNA Expression Profiling, Gene Expression Profiling, Custom RNA Isolation, qRT-PCR, and Bioinformatics Services to support and accelerate your research. Asuragen is one of the few service companies that can take a pharmaceutical client from biomarker discovery through diagnostic product development and cGMP manufacture of a companion diagnostic product for a new drug.

For more information, visit www.asuragen.com.

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