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Ventana Medical Systems, Inc. and Advanced Cell Diagnostics Enter Worldwide Co-Promotion Agreement for Fully Automated RNA In Situ Hybridization Assay Systems

TUCSON, Ariz. (Dec. 13, 2011) -- Ventana Medical Systems Inc. (Ventana), a member of the Roche Group, and Advanced Cell Diagnostics Inc. (ACD), announced today they have entered a worldwide co-promotion agreement for the first commercially available, fully automated RNA *in situ* hybridization (ISH) assay system capable of robust detection and visualization of virtually any expressed gene in routine clinical specimens at single-molecule sensitivity.

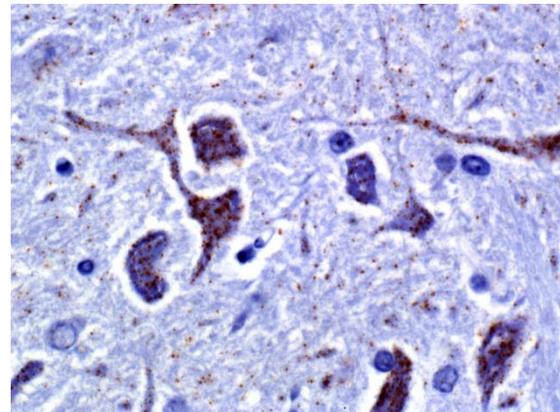
The two companies have partnered to automate this assay system on the VENTANA DISCOVERY series slide staining platforms. The product offerings are expected to become commercially available in the first quarter of 2012 and will initially be offered for research-use only (RUO) applications.

“Given the fact that the majority of biomarkers are discovered from genomic research and are RNA by nature, the automation of RNAscope represents an important milestone that will accelerate biomarker research into a new level of sophistication,” said Dr. Yuling Luo, founder, president and CEO of ACD. “RNAscope will become an equally indispensable tool alongside immunohistochemistry, fluorescence in situ hybridization and polymerase chain reaction for researchers in life sciences and drug development.”

Luo said the ability to generate robust and reproducible results from routine clinical specimens “makes the technology a compelling platform for clinical diagnostic applications in the foreseeable future.”

The RNAscope[®] FFPE Reagent Systems automated on the VENTANA DISCOVERY ULTRA and DISCOVERY XT offers researchers a powerful tool with unprecedented levels of performance.

“The combination of RNAscope reagent system and our sophisticated and flexible DISCOVERY platform and detection systems delivers a powerful solution for biomarker discovery and validation,” said Bill Crawford, director of marketing, Discovery, with Ventana. “It has significant potential to advance cell- and tissue-based biomarker analyses for future clinical and companion diagnostics development.”



mRNA of Nav1.7, a sodium channel, expressed in normal mouse brain tissue detected by automated RNAscope XT assay. Single mRNA molecules (i.e. the individual dots of the hybridization signal) can be observed in the paraventricular hypothalamic nucleus on both neuronal cell bodies and dendrites. This image is taken with 100x objective lens.

RNA in situ hybridization is an indispensable method to analyze gene expression in the context of tissue architecture in areas of oncology, virology, and neuroscience research. RNAscope is an award-winning breakthrough technology that provides researchers the unique capability to interrogate the function and disease relevance of any expressed genes in situ, especially for the approximately 5,000 genes and 15,000 non-coding RNAs in the human genome where no other technologies can adequately address. In addition, RNAscope allows researchers to tap into the estimated 400 million clinically-annotated, archived formalin-fixed paraffin-embedded (FFPE) tissue specimens for retrospective clinical studies in translational research.

The DISCOVERY XT and DISCOVERY ULTRA systems provide scientists and research professionals who require more than conventional IHC and ISH research methods with an array of fully automated applications, which improve flexibility and freedom and provide the necessary, reproducible results that optimize patient care.

About Advanced Cell Diagnostics, Inc.

Advanced Cell Diagnostics, Inc. (ACD) is a leader in the emerging field of molecular pathology, developing cell- and tissue-based diagnostic tests for personalized medicine. The company's products and services are based on its proprietary RNAscope® technology, the first multiplex fluorescent and chromogenic in situ hybridization platform capable of detecting and quantifying RNA biomarkers in situ at single-molecule sensitivity. ACD partners with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies to validate biomarkers for targeted therapeutic development in cancer and other diseases. These partnerships provide the foundation for ACD to develop companion diagnostic tests in conjunction with partners' targeted therapeutics. ACD also pursues internal programs to develop proprietary diagnostic tests in cancer management. Learn more about ACD and RNAscope technology at www.acdbio.com.

About Ventana Medical Systems, Inc.

Ventana Medical Systems, Inc. ("VMSI") (SIX: RO, ROG; OTCQX: RHHBY), a member of the Roche Group, innovates and manufactures instruments and reagents that automate tissue processing and slide staining for cancer diagnostics. VENTANA solutions are used in clinical histology and drug development research laboratories worldwide. The company's intuitive, integrated staining, workflow management platforms, and digital pathology solutions optimize laboratory efficiencies to reduce errors, support diagnosis and inform treatment decisions for anatomic pathology professionals. Together with Roche, VMSI is driving personalized medicine through accelerated drug discovery and the development of "companion diagnostics" to identify the patients most likely to respond favorably to specific therapies. Visit www.ventana.com to learn more.

RNAscope products are for research use only and not intended for diagnostic applications.

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Ventana products are for in vitro diagnostic use for specific applications and are research use only for other applications. The VENTANA DISCOVERY products are for research use only. Not for use in diagnostic procedures.

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