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SurModics and EGEN Announce Collaboration with Potential for Long-term Delivery of siRNA

HUNTSVILLE, Ala., July 27 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- SurModics, Inc. (Nasdaq: [SRDX](#)), a leading provider of drug delivery and surface modification technologies to the healthcare industry and EGEN, Inc., a privately held biopharmaceutical company focused on developing nucleic acid (DNA and RNAi) therapeutics for the treatment of human diseases, are pleased to announce they have executed a continuation of their feasibility collaboration focused on long-term controlled release of siRNA complexes. In work presented earlier this year at the Boston TIDES 2010 meeting, the companies disclosed more than 100 days of sustained release of siRNA nanocomplexes in vitro. Importantly, a high degree of gene knockdown was maintained with little indication of degradation of the released complexes. The kinetics of siRNA nanocomplex release can be modulated by alterations in formulation, providing a broad range of extended release systems. In this work, EGEN's proprietary TheraSilence™ nanoparticles were used in combination with SurModics' proprietary Eureka™ DUET platform. Work is progressing to further optimize the combination of these technologies leading to evaluation in relevant animal models.

Background on siRNA

Identification and characterization of mammalian siRNA mechanisms that control protein production has resulted in an important new area of research, opening up the potential to create entirely new classes of therapeutics that can specifically target genes responsible for a variety of disease states. This breakthrough provides the ability to create siRNA-based drugs that can lead to innovative treatments for many of the most devastating diseases such as cancer and genetic disorders.

Long-term siRNA delivery systems offer the potential of increased safety and efficacy, improved patient convenience (for example, with less dosing or injections), enhanced compliance and ultimately better therapeutic response. In general, the field of siRNA is not yet fully focused on long-term delivery, but it is expected that for many disease indications this will increasingly become a focus as siRNA based products get closer to market.

"We are thrilled to be working with the team at EGEN and are excited about the compelling data generated to date. At SurModics, we like to maintain a balance of cutting edge innovation. Many of our efforts are focused on creating new technologies and products for customers in the relative near-term. Others, however, like this extended release of siRNA, are ones where we intend to establish a leadership technology position for customers 2, 5, and 10 years in the future," said Arthur J. Tipton, Ph.D., Chief Scientific Officer of SurModics.

Khursheed Anwer, Ph.D., President and Chief Scientific Officer of EGEN added, "The program with SurModics employs our TheraSilence™ technology for sustained delivery of therapeutic RNAi. The extended release data generated from the collaborative work is impressive and warrants continuation of this exciting joint effort. A key mission for EGEN is to apply our broad-based RNAi delivery technology platform to create novel solutions for human diseases."

About EGEN, Inc.

EGEN, Inc. is a privately held biopharmaceutical company focused on developing therapeutics for the treatment of human diseases, particularly cancer. The Company specializes in the delivery of therapeutic nucleic acids (DNA and RNAi) aimed at specific disease targets via its proprietary **TheraPlas™** and **TheraSilence™** technologies. EGEN has a significant portfolio of functionalized, biocompatible synthetic delivery systems for use in combination with DNA, RNA and other biomacromolecules for therapeutic applications. EGEN is located in Huntsville, Alabama in the Hudson-Alpha Institute of Biotechnology. More information about the company can be found at www.egeninc.com

About SurModics, Inc.

SurModics' vision is to extend and improve the lives of patients through technology innovation. The Company partners with the world's foremost medical device, pharmaceutical and life science companies to develop and commercialize innovative products that result in improved diagnosis and treatment for patients. Core offerings include: drug delivery technologies (coatings, microparticles, nanoparticles, and implants); surface modification coating technologies that impart lubricity, prohealing, and biocompatibility capabilities; and components for in vitro diagnostic test kits and specialized surfaces for cell culture and microarrays. SurModics is headquartered in Eden Prairie, Minnesota and its SurModics Pharmaceuticals subsidiary is located in Birmingham, Alabama. For more information about the Company, visit www.surmodics.com. The content of SurModics' website is not part of this release or part of any filings the Company makes with the SEC.

Safe Harbor for Forward-Looking Statements for SurModics, Inc.

This press release contains forward-looking statements. Statements that are not historical or current facts, including statements about beliefs and expectations, are forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties, and important factors could cause actual results to differ materially from those anticipated, including those identified under "Risk Factors" in Part I, Item 1A of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2009, and updated in our subsequent reports filed with the SEC. These reports are available in the Investors section of our website at www.surmodics.com and at the SEC website at www.sec.gov. Forward-looking statements speak only as of the date they are made, and we undertake no obligation to update them in light of new information or future events.

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