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XOMA Granted First European Patent Covering XOMA 052

BERKELEY, Calif., Nov. 4, 2009 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- XOMA Ltd. (Nasdaq:XOMA), a leader in the discovery and development of therapeutic antibodies, today announced the grant of its first European Patent related to the XOMA 052 program. Granted by the European Patent Office, the patent covers XOMA's interleukin-1 beta (IL-1 beta) antibody XOMA 052, as well as nucleic acids, expression vectors and production cell lines for the manufacture of XOMA 052. The patent provides exclusivity in Europe into 2026.

IL-1 beta is a pro-inflammatory cytokine involved in the development of Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, rheumatoid arthritis, gout and other diseases. By binding to IL-1 beta, XOMA 052 inhibits the activation of the IL-1 receptor, thereby preventing the cellular signaling events that produce inflammation. Earlier this year, XOMA completed successful Phase 1 trials of XOMA 052 in Type 2 diabetes patients, and has initiated its Phase 2 clinical development program in Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

"This new patent is XOMA's first European patent providing exclusivity for XOMA 052 and complements our two U.S. Patents, which issued earlier this year," said Steven Engle, XOMA Chairman and Chief Executive Officer.

About XOMA

XOMA discovers, develops and manufactures novel antibody therapeutics for its own proprietary pipeline, as well as through license and collaborative agreements with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, and under its contracts with the U.S. government. The company's proprietary product pipeline includes:

* XOMA 052, an anti-IL-1 beta antibody in Phase 2 development for Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, with potential for the treatment of a wide range of inflammatory diseases
* XOMA 3AB, an antibody candidate in pre-IND studies to neutralize the botulinum toxin, among the most deadly potential bioterror threats, under development through funding provided by the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases of the National Institutes of Health
* A preclinical pipeline with candidates in development for inflammatory, autoimmune, infectious and oncological diseases.

In addition to its proprietary pipeline, XOMA develops products with premier pharmaceutical companies including Novartis AG, Schering-Plough Research Institute and Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited.

XOMA has multiple revenue streams resulting from the licensing of its antibody technologies, product royalties, development collaborations and biodefense contracts. XOMA's technologies have contributed to the success of marketed antibody products, including LUCENTIS(R) (ranibizumab injection) for wet age-related macular degeneration and CIMZIA(R) (certolizumab pegol) for rheumatoid arthritis and Crohn's disease.

The company has a premier antibody discovery and development platform that incorporates an unmatched collection of antibody phage display libraries and proprietary Human Engineering(tm) and Bacterial Cell Expression (BCE), affinity maturation and manufacturing technologies. BCE is a key breakthrough biotechnology for the discovery and manufacturing of antibodies and other proteins. As a result, more than 50 pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies have signed BCE licenses, and several licensed product candidates are in clinical development.

XOMA has a fully integrated product development infrastructure, extending from pre-clinical science to approval, and a team of about 200 employees at its Berkeley, California location. For more information, please visit http://www.xoma.com.

The XOMA Ltd. logo is available at https://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=5960

Forward-Looking Statements

Certain statements contained herein concerning product development and capabilities of XOMA's technologies or that otherwise relate to future periods are forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. These statements are based on assumptions that may not prove accurate. Actual results could differ materially from those anticipated due to certain risks inherent in the biotechnology industry and for companies engaged in the development of new products in a regulated market.

These risks, including those related to inability to comply with NASDAQ's continued listing requirements; the declining and generally unstable nature of current economic conditions; the results of discovery research and pre-clinical testing; the timing or results of pending and future clinical trials (including the design and progress of clinical trials; safety and efficacy of the products being tested; action, inaction or delay by the FDA, European or other regulators or their advisory bodies; and analysis or interpretation by, or submission to, these entities or others of scientific data); changes in the status of existing collaborative and licensing relationships; the ability of collaborators, licensees and other third parties to meet their obligations; XOMA's ability to meet the demands of the United States government agency with which it has entered into its government contracts; competition; market demands for products; scale-up and marketing capabilities; availability of additional licensing or collaboration opportunities; international operations; share price volatility; XOMA's financing needs and opportunities; uncertainties regarding the status of biotechnology patents; uncertainties as to the costs of protecting intellectual property; and risks associated with XOMA's status as a Bermuda company, are described in more detail in XOMA's most recent filing on Form 10-K and in other SEC filings. Consider such risks carefully when considering XOMA's prospects.

CONTACT: XOMA Ltd.

Company and Investor Contact:
Carol DeGuzman
510-204-7270
deguzman@xoma.com

Porter Novelli Life Sciences
Media Contact:
Carolyn Hawley
619-849-5375
chawley@pnlifesciences.com