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First Ever Cannabis-Based ETF to Include PharmaCyte Biotech, Abbott Laboratories, and GW Pharmaceuticals

NEW YORK, NY -- (Marketwired) -- 02/23/17 -- PharmaCyte Biotech (OTCQB: PMCB) will join GW Pharmaceuticals, Abbott Laboratories and 66 other publicly traded companies in what could be the first ever cannabis exchange-traded fund (ETF) -- the Emerging AgroSphere ETF. One week ago, ETF Managers Group, headquartered in Summit, New Jersey, filed an initial registration statement with the SEC to become the first of its kind in the ETF industry (https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1467831/000114420417009539/v459698_485apos.

According to the filing, the proposed fund will be focused on medical cannabis and "will not invest in any companies that are focused on serving the non-medical marijuana market in the United States, Canada or any other country unless and until such time as the production and sale of non-medical marijuana becomes legal in the United States, Canada or such other country, respectively."

Now ETF Managers Group will wait for the SEC to approve the fund, and, if approved, investors can own a piece of the 69 companies that make up the proposed fund all under one ETF. This, of course, means that fund managers will need to buy up shares of the companies that make up the fund, which should increase the liquidity of each of these companies. The index composition can be viewed at: https://www.solactive.com/indices/?indexmembers=DE000SLA1CR1

PharmaCyte Biotech, GW Pharmaceuticals, Abbot Laboratories, Cannabis Science Inc., Medical Marijuana Inc. and the 64 other companies that will make up the proposed ETF, will fall into one of the following three categories. The companies will either be (i) engaged in lawful medical research intended to lead to the production of government approved prescription drugs which utilize natural or synthetic versions of the cannabinoid, cannabidiol (CBD), and other cannabis based extracts, (ii) involved in the production or sale of products which are legal derivatives of industrial hemp, or (iii) involved in the supply chain of either category of company.

PharmaCyte Biotech's work in medical cannabis began when it acquired an exclusive, worldwide license to use its Cell-in-a-Box® technology in combination with genetically modified non-stem cell lines which are designed to activate cannabinoid molecules for development of treatments for diseases and their related symptoms.

In contrast to the work being done by PharmaCyte's competitors, the company plans to combine the Cell-in-a-Box® live-cell encapsulation technology with cannabinoids to develop a unique therapy for difficult-to-treat and deadly forms of cancer, such as brain cancer. Some cannabinoids are prodrugs that must be converted into their cancer-killing form.

These prodrugs will be used with the Cell-in-a-Box® technology in ways that optimize their anticancer properties while minimizing or even eliminating adverse side effects that normally occur with chemotherapy to treat cancer.

PharmaCyte says that it plans to focus initially on developing specific therapies based on carefully chosen cannabinoid molecules rather than using complex Cannabis extracts. The company believes an understanding of the chemical and biochemical processes involved in the interaction of substances derived from Cannabis with live-cell encapsulation will provide the opportunity to develop targeted "green" approaches to treating cancers, such as pancreatic, brain, breast and prostate, among others.

PharmaCyte entered into a Research Agreement with the University of Northern Colorado (UNC). The goal of the ongoing research at UNC is to develop methods for the identification, separation and quantification of cannabinoids (which will act like prodrugs) that the company says may be used in combination with its Cell-in-a-Box® technology to treat various diseases, beginning with brain and pancreatic cancers.

Initial studies were undertaken at UNC on behalf of PharmaCyte using "cannabinoid-like" model compounds to identify the appropriate cell type that can convert the selected cannabinoid prodrugs into metabolites with anticancer activity. UNC is now working with cannabinoid prodrugs from Cannabis to identify the appropriate cell type for the same purpose. Once identified, the genetically modified cells that will produce the appropriate enzyme to convert the cannabinoid prodrugs will be encapsulated using PharmaCyte's Cell-in-a-Box® technology. The encapsulated cells and cannabinoid prodrugs identified by these studies will then be combined and used for future studies to evaluate their anticancer effectiveness.

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