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## River Blindness Trial for Moxidectin

The parent company of Fort Dodge Animal Health, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, has announced clinical trials of moxidectin in three African countries as a potential treatment for onchocerciasis, or river blindness, one of the leading infectious causes of blindness across Africa. Moxidectin, which is the active ingredient in Fort Dodge's leading equine worming EQUEST® brands and its cattle/sheep wormer, Cydectin®, is being investigated for its potential to kill or sterilise the adult worms of *Onchocerca volvulus*, which cause onchocerciasis.

During a joint workshop at the World Conference of Science Journalists in London on Wednesday 1 July 2009, the World Health Organisation (WHO) announced the clinical trials, which will be conducted through the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (WHO/TDR) and will be executed by the WHO/TDR and Wyeth Pharmaceuticals.

River blindness is an infectious disease that threatens 100 million people across Africa. According to the WHO, the clinical trials, which are set to take place in Ghana, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo over the next two and a half years, offer the hope that the disease can finally be wiped out.

River blindness has special significance for the WHO. The UN agency launched an eradication campaign in 1970 using insecticide to kill the blackflies that transmit the disease-causing worm larvae. The initiative came close but did not fully destroy the blight, which is depicted in a statue outside the WHO's Geneva headquarters showing a young boy leading a blind elderly man with a stick.

Marc Snacken, European Business Manager for Livestock at Fort Dodge, commented: "It's exciting news that moxidectin, which is already widely used to treat parasites in dogs, cats,



horses, sheep and cattle, may have the potential to destroy the worms that cause river blindness, which is a debilitating disease affecting many millions of people in Africa.”

Helen Barnes, European Business Manager for Equine at Fort Dodge, added: “Moxidectin, a second generation macrocyclic lactone is already recognised in the field of animal health for its high potency.

“It’s been demonstrated that it’s effective in controlling *Onchocerca spp* in horses with Fort Dodge’s moxidectin-based equine wormer, distributed in the United States under the brand name Quest®, already licensed to control a species of *Onchocerca*. In horses, the parasite is associated with causing ‘moon blindness,’ a syndrome which, in acute cases, can lead to blindness. Fortunately, for horse owners in Europe, the incidence of *Onchocerca spp*. infection is rare.”

Fort Dodge Animal Health is a leading manufacturer and marketer of animal health products for the companion animal, equine, livestock, swine and poultry industries in North America, Europe and international markets. Key products include ProMeris®, ProMeris Duo®, Duramune®, Fevaxyn®, Duvaxyn®, Suvaxyn®, Poulvac®, Cydectin® and Equest® and Equest Pramox®.

#### **Note to editors:**

*The statements in this press release that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements based on current expectations of future events and are subject to risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such statements.*

*These risks and uncertainties include risks associated with the inherent uncertainty of the timing and success of product research, development and commercialisation (including with respect to our pipeline products), drug pricing and payment for our products by government and third-party payors, manufacturing, data generated on the safety and efficacy of our products, economic conditions including interest and currency exchange rate fluctuations, changes in generally accepted accounting principles, the impact of competitive or generic products, trade buying patterns, global business operations, product liability and other types of litigation, the impact of legislation and regulatory compliance, intellectual property rights, strategic relationships with third parties, environmental liabilities, and other risks and uncertainties, including those detailed from time to time in our periodic reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including our current reports on Form 8-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and annual report on Form 10-K, particularly the discussion under the caption “Item 1A, RISK FACTORS.” We assume no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future developments or otherwise.*

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