



Innovative Solutions For Global Agricultural Needs™



## FUTURAGENE PLC (“FuturaGene” or the “Company”)

### FUTURAGENE’S WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY, CBD TECHNOLOGIES, LTD. AND FORAGE GENETICS INTERNATIONAL TO COLLABORATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF ALFALFA WITH ENHANCED DIGESTIBILITY

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FuturaGene, which develops environmentally friendly solutions that enable plants to grow in hostile conditions and to stabilise and improve crop yields, is pleased to announce that its wholly owned subsidiary, CBD Technologies Ltd. (“**CBD Tech**”) has entered into a Development and Evaluation Agreement with Forage Genetics International (“**Forage Genetics**”) for the enhancement of digestibility of alfalfa for livestock forage and biofuels.

Alfalfa is a principal feedstock for dairy cows, but is also an important food source for horses, beef cattle and sheep. There are approximately 23 million acres of alfalfa harvested for hay and alfalfa silage in the United States annually. Alfalfa is the fourth most widely grown crop in the United States behind corn, soybeans and wheat. Alfalfa hay production is estimated to generate more than \$7 billion annually.

CBD Tech has developed a novel modality for the modification of plant cell walls. CBD Tech has demonstrated, in ruminant *in vitro* and *in vivo* assays, that plants modified using its technologies are able to yield up to 30 percent more calories from plant fibre. Under the terms of the Development and Evaluation Agreement, CBD Tech will supply technology to Forage Genetics that will develop and test elite varieties of cell wall modified alfalfa. Costs for the development and evaluation will be borne by Forage Genetics.

“We are extremely excited to work with Forage Genetics on this project as they are the world leaders in developing high value alfalfa varieties and germplasm. They are also the market leaders in developing and bringing biotech traits in alfalfa to market,” said Dr. Stanley Hirsch, the CEO of CBD Tech.

“The combination of the global alfalfa market and Forage Genetics’ market position, which gives us significant access to the U.S. Canada, Mexico and Argentina, makes this an attractive deal for us”

This novel technology is designed to enhance the digestibility of alfalfa, increasing energy content of the forage and decreasing undigested manure solids. The changes in cell wall composition may also increase the value of alfalfa as a potential biofuel crop.



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“Forage Genetics is committed to exploring for novel ways to improve alfalfa for the benefit of growers and forage users. This new research relationship with CBD Tech gives us the exciting opportunity to evaluate the CBD technology in alfalfa, providing a novel and potentially highly effective way to improve forage digestibility for alfalfa customers,” said Keith Newhouse, Director of Business Development for Forage Genetics. “Forage Genetics and CBD Tech are working together to combine the sustainability of a highly productive perennial crop that fixes its own nitrogen with characteristics that add value to the forage produced, whether for animal feed or for an industrial feedstock.”

Mark Pritchard, Chairman of FuturaGene, said: “FuturaGene is committed to developing the strength of its intellectual property portfolio and we look forward to working with Forage Genetics to combine the benefits of our technologies.”

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**About FuturaGene PLC**

FuturaGene is a leading agricultural biotechnology company focused on research, development, and commercialisation of technologies that play key roles in substantially improving agronomic traits of value in plants. In particular the Company is focused on the development and commercialisation of genetically modified plants for improving yields, processability and environmental sustainability in the forestry, biofuels and agricultural sectors. FuturaGene has actively licensed intellectual property from leading universities in the field of abiotic stress and is exploiting the synergies of these technologies with the cell wall modification platform of its wholly owned subsidiary, CBD Technology Inc (“CBD Tech) in forestry, food and biofuel crops.



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CBD Tech has pioneered a modality for altered cell walls, resulting in enhanced growth and biomass, increased cellulose, improved fibre properties, improved digestibility and processability, and increased yield properties and has secured broad intellectual property covering plants with modified cell walls showing such altered properties.

### **About Forage Genetics International**

Forage Genetics International a wholly owned subsidiary of Land O'Lakes, Inc., is the world leader in the development, production and marketing of alfalfa germplasm and traits that add value to their seed customers, and to livestock producers and other alfalfa end users.