



La Société de promotion économique  
du Québec métropolitain

**Press release**

***For immediate distribution***

**Biomedical and Life Sciences**

***INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PLANT-MADE PHARMACEUTICALS  
Producers of biologics will meet the pharmaceutical industry in Québec City***

Québec City, January 15, 2002 – Are you aware that plants and animals may be altered to produce medicines? This is the subject matter of the **International Conference on Plant-made Pharmaceuticals** to be held in Québec City on March 16, 17, 18 and 19, 2003<sup>1</sup> at the Hotel Loews Le Concorde. This conference, which is the most important one of its kind ever organized on the subject, will draw 700 participants in support of the emergence of a manufacturing technology that could revolutionize the way drugs are produced.

Making pharmaceuticals in plants consist in transforming a living organism into a potent molecule factory. This technology answers an unmet medical need. Plants will allow for large-scale capacity at a cost that could be much lower than current manufacturing methods. Since the 80's, new therapies called 'biologics' have been pouring out of the best pharmaceutical and research labs of the world to cure cancer, arthritis, heart conditions and other severe or chronic diseases. However, current production methods are insufficient, and some of these novel drugs may never even reach the patient because of excessive costs or lack of production capacity.

"Québec City will be hosting a large venue of pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies that invent new drugs and, Canadian, American and European ones that offer manufacturing solutions," stated François Arcand, one of the event organizers and Chairman and CEO of Medicago in Québec City. "Companies working with animal models, government representatives, investors and specialized press will also be present to discuss scientific, business and regulatory issues." Medicago (Québec City), SemBioSys (Calgary), Plantigen (London, ON), TGN Biotech (Québec City) and Nexia Biotechnologies (Montréal) form the impressive Canadian contingent of this emerging industry sector that counts no more than two dozen companies throughout the world.

The International Conference on Plant-made Pharmaceuticals is organized by the International Molecular Farming Association (IMFA inc.) in cooperation with DIA (Drug Information Association), BIO (Biotechnology Industry Organization), BioteCanada (Biotechnology Association of Canada) and the support of the governments of Québec and Canada. The core of the event organizing committee is François Arcand and Dr. Louis-Philippe Vézina from Medicago and Andrew Baum and Dr. Maurice Moloney from SemBioSys. The event program

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that, since the announcement, the Conference was postponed from October 26-29, 2002, to March 16-19, 2003.

will be made public in March 2002. For information kits, registration forms, or any other information, please consult our web site at [www.cmp2003.org](http://www.cmp2003.org).

The exceptional potential exhibited by the Québec City region in the biomedical and life sciences sector is well documented. The region is increasingly establishing itself in the sector with its 41 research centres and 27 businesses, and the field of molecule synthesis is one of the more promising market segments,' indicated James Donovan, Vice-President of the Greater Québec Economic Development Corporation (SPEQM) which is hosting the event.

As a reminder, the mission of the SPEQM is to expand the region's economic bases by favouring the promotion of investment and export and the emergence and development of technology companies. Since 1993 the SPEQM has aspired to strengthen 8 strategic sectors considered cornerstones of the regional economy of which: biomedical and life sciences; bio-food products; and environment technologies.