

HUDSON RIVER

Biotechnology

Press release

Hudson River Biotechnology raises €5m Series A funding to accelerate growth of its plant gene editing business and expand into nanoparticles for use in field applications

August 12, 2021

Agricultural biotechnology scaleup Hudson River Biotechnology (HRB) today announced the close of a €5 million Series A round led by Bridford Group. Half of the round is non-dilutive funding.

Wageningen-based Hudson River Biotechnology has developed technologies to (1) enhance the performance of crops using CRISPR gene editing and (2) apply agrochemical inputs in a more efficient and sustainable manner through targeted, nanotechnology-based delivery systems. By providing these technologies to its partners, HRB contributes to improving plant yields while reducing the inputs necessary, ultimately decreasing agriculture's environmental impact.

“In the face of a changing climate, the need to achieve sustainability goals and a growing population, current agricultural practices are becoming untenable. Only new technological approaches will transform agriculture into a sustainable and efficient activity.” CEO Rudi Ariaans points out.

“That is exactly where we have been operating as the global technology leader in the industry. Over the last years, we have seen an enthusiastic response from our customers, due to our unique approach in combining breakthrough technologies from the pharma field

in our proprietary and proven CRISPR workflow (TiGER), including the application of nanoparticle delivery systems.”

Owing to its expertise in both CRISPR-based gene editing and the application of nanoparticles, HRB can support partners in both the development of important traits for crops, and more effective delivery of agro-biologicals. An example is the company’s ability to supply genetically uniform edited plants through single cell regeneration in just one editing round.

Ferdinand Los, CSO at Hudson River Biotechnology: “We strongly believe in our ability to keep innovating and be at the forefront of technological developments. This funding is another building block, which will allow us to further scale up the existing gene editing business.” Additionally, HRB will grow its staff count from 25 to 40 in the next 12 months and increase its laboratory space to some 1000 square meters (10600 sq.ft.).

Another important building block of this steep pace of innovation is the company’s scientific advisory board. Prof. John van der Oost, head of the Bacterial Genetics group at Wageningen University and a pioneer of the “CRISPR revolution”, joined the board in May.

Rudi and Ferdinand note that the future looks bright, as big players from the agricultural sector have partnered up with HRB to solve key bottlenecks in their R&D pipeline. “The continued interest and collaborative projects prove that we have taken the right decisions in the last few years. This investment will allow us to build on that track record, further optimize our gene editing expertise and enter a massive market for field application based on nanotechnology.” Rudi: “And we are still hiring, so jump aboard!”

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