

News release

Versitech Limited and Agragen, LLC enter into an exclusive licensing agreement to enhance the agronomic performance of camelina

Agragen, a Cincinnati-based biotechnology company, announces it has entered into an exclusive licensing agreement with Versitech Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of the University of Hong Kong, for two key technologies to enhance the agronomic performance of camelina.

These new technologies, when coupled with Agragen's world-leading technology to genetically modify camelina, will enable Agragen to potentially double the yield of camelina. "Early results from one of the technologies indicate a yield enhancement of camelina over two-fold," says Eric J. Murphy, Agragen chief scientific officer. "The other technology looks to enhance oil yield under drought conditions and enables camelina to make oil more efficiently," notes Murphy. "The enhanced yield enables competitively priced feed-stock for biofuels, even in today's low price oil market."

This new ability to produce low-cost camelina oil, coupled with the company's principals' extensive experience in using camelina-derived oil to produce low carbon footprint jet fuel and large-scale production of camelina in the field, makes this effort a significant shift in the prospects for camelina to become a source for sustainable production of biofuel feedstock. This is especially attractive because camelina can be used in double cropping systems, which maximizes land use across agricultural production worldwide.

In addition to biofuels, Agragen has embarked on making bioactive lipids for use in human health and disease. "While other groups have worked on making fish oil in camelina, our patent position for the transformation of camelina enables us to enter into this market in a very meaningful way," says Murphy.

In the near future, Agragen will announce how this new technology licensed from Versitech Limited will be coupled with other technologies to enhance the production of bioactive lipids for use to promote human health and combat disease. "We have a couple of great, very unique oils in the pipeline that have the potential to become important players in human health," notes Murphy.

Agragen is focused on transforming camelina into a key platform for oil production for use in biofuels and in human health applications. This innovative technology offers a new horizon for camelina, a truly exciting time for human health and alternative fuels.