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AUSTRALIAN SCIENTISTS IN SWINE FLU BREAKTHROUGH

Seaweed Derivative Shown to Inhibit H1N1 Virus

In a breakthrough that offers new hope for the containment of influenza outbreaks, an Australian biotechnology company has isolated a natural extract from seaweed which has been shown to inhibit the H1N1 virus.

The extract - known as Maritech® 926 - is a fucoidan compound derived from the *Undaria pinnatifida* species of seaweed. *In vitro* tests performed under contract by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the US, have shown that Maritech® 926 can inhibit the H1N1 influenza virus at extremely low concentrations.

Developed by biotechnology company Marinova Pty Ltd, Maritech® 926 is a natural polysaccharide which has immediate market potential in nutritional supplements, hand washes and nasal delivery products which target the spread and prevention of viral conditions. Scope also exists for the compound to be included in pharmaceutical and medical device applications. As a result of these findings, Marinova has filed for patent protection over the application of Maritech® 926 and other fucoidan extracts in a range of anti-viral applications.

In announcing the findings and patent filing, Marinova's Senior Scientist, Dr Helen Fitton, said:

"Fucoidan extracts such as Maritech® 926 are known to have significant inhibitory effects on a range of coated viruses. We are particularly excited by the fact that these seaweed extracts have now been shown to have an inhibitory effect on H1N1 at extremely low concentrations. With H1N1 already becoming resistant to some other antiviral agents, we believe that Maritech® 926 offers a potent, natural alternative which supports the immune system against viral attacks".

About Marinova:

Marinova Pty Ltd is an Australian biotechnology company, with extensive research and manufacturing facilities in Hobart, Tasmania. The company is dedicated to creating innovative and chemically consistent extracts from marine plants for use in medical, nutritional and skin care applications. Using its proprietary solvent-free Maritech® process, Marinova has the unique ability to supply high-purity fucoidan ingredients which not only meet HACCP, ISO9001, GMP and Organic quality requirements, but also comply with FDA and European pharmaceutical standards.

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