

AlphaVax Announces Award of \$4.8 million for a SARS Vaccine

Research Triangle Park, N.C. AlphaVax announced today that it has received a new three-year, \$4.8 million vaccine development grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The award covers early development of a vaccine against SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome), a new infectious disease that first appeared in 2003 in Asia and spread rapidly to other parts of the world, infecting over 8000 people. In addition to proving highly infectious, SARS also incurred a high mortality rate, killing 10% of the people it infected. Although ultimately checked through energetic public health measures, the disease had a severe economic impact, estimated at as much as \$10 billion. In Toronto alone, where quarantine restrictions adversely affected travel and tourism, the SARS outbreak was responsible for losses of \$1 billion to the city. Since there is no current cure or protective vaccine, the identification and development of novel medicines and vaccines have received a high priority by governments and public health agencies around the world.

"We are gratified to receive this important new award," said Jonathan Smith, Ph.D., AlphaVax Chief Scientific Officer and Principal Investigator for the new grant. "Together with all our other peer-reviewed NIH-funded vaccine programs, this reflects the significant potential our technology has to generate new vaccines against many of the diseases that represent the most important challenges to public health – whether long-established or new and emergent threats – including the significant threat represented by SARS."

AlphaVax scientists collaborated with the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta and with Southern Research Institute in Birmingham, Alabama, during the course of the 2003 epidemic and their work on SARS.

AlphaVax has four additional active NIH-supported vaccine development grants supporting programs in HIV and biodefense. In addition, the company and its other academic and industry partners are working on diseases like herpes, human papilloma virus (the principal cause of cervical cancer), other viral respiratory infections, and cancer.