Twist Bioscience Begins Shipping of Synthetic RNA Controls for UK Variant Strain of SARS-CoV-2

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-- RNA Controls Can Help Avoid False Negative Results --

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan. 14, 2021-- Twist Bioscience Corporation (Nasdaq: TWST), a company enabling customers to succeed through its offering of high-quality synthetic DNA using its silicon platform, today announced that it has started shipping its new synthetic RNA reference controls, which includes the new variant strain of SARS-CoV-2 identified in the United Kingdom. With this new strain (B1.1.7 lineage, variant under investigation VUI-202012/01), which contains multiple mutations in the spike protein and other areas of the viral genome, some of the RT-PCR probes used widely in COVID-19 testing no longer detect the S gene that codes for the spike protein. This can lead to false negative test results.

“By offering synthetic controls for this specific mutation, our customers are able to update their testing protocols, which will help to potentially avoid false negative results when testing for SARS-CoV-2 infection,” said Emily M. Leproust, Ph.D., CEO and co-founder of Twist Bioscience. “These controls, used alone or in conjunction with our SARS-CoV-2 NGS RUO Assay to identify all SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid sequences, are invaluable research tools for monitoring viral evolution and for population-scale surveillance.”

For more information on the Twist products to combat COVID-19, please visit: https://www.twistbioscience.com/coronavirus-research-tools.

In March, Twist launched synthetic SARS-CoV-2 RNA distinct reference sequences as positive controls for the development of both next-generation sequencing (NGS) and reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) assays to test for SARS-CoV-2. These controls continue to be included in many different assays worldwide and can be used to determine the limit of detection, monitor day-to-day test variations and are included on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) website as reference materials for SARS-CoV-2. Twist has subsequently released additional SARS-CoV-2 controls to cover the evolution of the virus, and remains committed to using its DNA synthesis platform to offer valuable products that improve health and sustainability.

The Twist synthetic controls are designed based on specific SARS-CoV-2 variants, cover the full viral genome and are sequence-verified. For customers interested in alternative variants of SARS-CoV-2, Twist can provide custom controls and offers a suite of research tools, including next-generation sequencing (NGS) products for SARS-CoV-2 as well as a broad respiratory panel and the most comprehensive viral panel.

Customers purchasing synthetic controls are subject to Twist’s leading biosecurity screening protocols and applicable laws and regulations.

About Twist Bioscience Corporation

Twist Bioscience is a leading and rapidly growing synthetic biology and genomics company that has developed a disruptive DNA synthesis platform to industrialize the engineering of biology. The core of the platform is a proprietary technology that pioneers a new method of manufacturing synthetic DNA by “writing” DNA on a silicon chip. Twist is leveraging its unique technology to manufacture a broad range of synthetic DNA-based products, including synthetic genes, tools for next-generation sequencing (NGS) preparation, and antibody libraries for drug discovery and development. Twist is also pursuing longer-term opportunities in digital data storage in DNA and biologics drug discovery. Twist makes products for use across many industries including healthcare, industrial chemicals, agriculture and academic research.

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Legal Notice Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements. All statements other than statements of historical facts contained herein, including without limitation Twist’s ability to deliver synthetic controls for SARS-CoV-2 to its customers and the ability for the new synthetic RNA reference control to help avoid false negative results when testing for SARS-CoV-2 infection, are forward-looking statements reflecting the current beliefs and expectations of management made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Such forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties, and other important factors that may cause Twist Bioscience’s actual results, performance, or achievements to be materially different from any future results, performance, or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements. Such risks and uncertainties include, among others, the risks and uncertainties of the ability to attract new customers and retain and grow sales from existing customers; risks and uncertainties of rapidly changing technologies and extensive competition in synthetic biology could make the products Twist Bioscience is developing obsolete or non-competitive; uncertainties of the retention of a significant customer; risks of third party claims alleging infringement of patents and proprietary rights or seeking to invalidate Twist Bioscience’s patents or proprietary rights; and the risk that Twist Bioscience’s proprietary rights may be insufficient to protect its technologies. For a further description of the risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ from those expressed in these forward-looking statements, as well as risks relating to Twist Bioscience’s business in general, see Twist Bioscience’s risk factors set forth in Twist Bioscience’s Quarterly Report Form 10-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on November 27, 2020 and subsequent filings with the SEC. Any forward-looking statements contained in this press release speak only as of the date hereof, and Twist Bioscience specifically disclaims any obligation to update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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