

## **Akzo Nobel opens new biotech vaccines facility**

**Arnhem, the Netherlands, December 1, 2003 – Akzo Nobel officially opened its new biotech vaccines production facility in Boxmeer this afternoon. The opening ceremony was performed by Secretary-General for Economic Affairs, Mr. J.W. Oosterwijk, acting on behalf of the Dutch Minister of Economic Affairs, Mr. L.J. Brinkhorst.**

**The state-of-the-art Nobilon facility will produce vaccines for Akzo Nobel's animal healthcare business Intervet and at the same time function as a platform for exploring opportunities in the human vaccines field.**

In his opening speech, the Secretary-General welcomed the initiative the facility embodies. "This innovative undertaking will strengthen the knowledge-based economy of the Netherlands, something the Cabinet considers a priority," said Mr. Oosterwijk. "To broaden the Netherlands' innovative base the Ministry of Economic Affairs has a policy of actively stimulating growth in the number of new high-tech companies," he added.

### **Biotech facilities**

In addition to modern offices, the new facility contains "clean rooms", each with its own air-handling unit, which makes it possible to work with several vaccines at the same time. This unique feature creates a high degree of flexibility and enhances the production output of the facility. The use of biotechnological processes to produce vaccines is a key feature of the facility: viral material is grown by cell-culture techniques in fermentation vessels and purified to produce high-quality vaccines.

### **Intervet's needs**

Intervet, the world's largest animal vaccine producer, foresees growing demand for improved animal vaccines, e.g. marker vaccines, that can combat emerging new diseases and the changing nature of existing ones. The facility will supply Intervet with the vaccines it needs for both the farm and companion animal markets. Use of the most up to date biotech processes enables the cost-effective production of high quality vaccines, making the facility an attractive supplier. Moreover, its independent, multi-purpose set-up effectively puts expanded capacity at Intervet's disposal while allowing it to defer investment in its own production facilities for the short term.

### **Human vaccines**

The state-of-the-art facility provides Akzo Nobel with an ideal platform from which to explore the potential of the human vaccines market. Akzo Nobel's human vaccines start-up Nobilon has surveyed the market to see where there is a good match between demand and Akzo Nobel's R&D knowledge base. Following identification of sufficiently attractive market segments, Nobilon can tap into the expertise of Akzo Nobel's three Pharma businesses – Intervet, Diosynth and Organon – to develop, produce and market vaccines to prevent human infectious diseases. The flexible nature of the facility allows the current focus on production of animal vaccines to change to production of human vaccines as required.

“The opening of this facility represents the achievement of several goals at once,” said Hans Wijers, Chairman of Akzo Nobel’s Board of Management. “First, it strengthens our strategic position in the biotech sector and expands our overall production capacity in that area. Next, it allows Intervet to meet market demands for animal vaccines in the coming years without immediate investment in a dedicated plant. And, finally, it offers Akzo Nobel a low-risk platform from which to explore the human vaccines market and create opportunities to harness synergies that exist between Intervet, Organon and Diosynth. All together, this facility demonstrates how the innovative use of resources can create a multiplier-effect in terms of outcomes,” explained Wijers.

- - -

#### **Note for the editor**

Akzo Nobel, based in the Netherlands, serves customers throughout the world with healthcare products, coatings and chemicals. Consolidated sales for 2002 totaled EUR 14 billion. The Company currently employs approximately 65,200 people in more than 80 countries. Financial results for 2003 will be published on February 3, 2004.

Nobilon is a biotechnology company committed to bring to market human vaccines for combating infectious diseases in mankind. Nobilon strives to discover, develop, produce and commercialize human vaccines, as well as actively pursuing collaborations with others in the sector to bring innovative human vaccines to market. Founded in 2003 and headquartered in Boxmeer, the Netherlands where its state-of-the-art, multi-purpose production facilities are situated, Nobilon draws on the know-how and expertise of sister companies Organon, Intervet and Diosynth within Akzo Nobel's group of Pharma businesses.

Intervet, a business unit of Akzo Nobel, headquartered in Boxmeer, The Netherlands, with sales of EUR 1,081 million in 2002, is focused on the research and development, manufacturing and marketing of veterinary products. Products include vaccines for the prevention of infectious diseases, anti-infectives, anti-parasitics, pharmaceutical specialties and products for fertility management. All of these products are intended for use in a variety of animal species, including poultry, pigs, cattle, sheep, goats, horses, fish and companion animals. Intervet operates globally with its own marketing organizations. The company currently employs around 5,000 people.

Internet: [www.nobilonvaccines.com](http://www.nobilonvaccines.com)  
[www.intervet.com](http://www.intervet.com)  
[www.akzonobel.com](http://www.akzonobel.com)

#### **Not for publication – for more information**

Akzo Nobel N.V.

Christine Wunderlich, Manager Corporate Communications, tel. +31 26 366 4343

#### **Safe Harbor Statement\***

This press release may contain statements which address such key issues as Akzo Nobel's growth strategy, future financial results, market positions, product development, pharmaceutical products in the pipeline, and product approvals. Such statements should be carefully considered, and it should be understood that many factors could cause forecasted and actual results to differ from these statements. These factors include, but are not limited to, price fluctuations, currency fluctuations, developments in raw material and personnel costs, pensions, physical and environmental risks, legal issues, and legislative, fiscal, and other regulatory measures. Stated competitive positions are based on management estimates supported by information provided by specialized external agencies. For a more complete discussion of the risk factors affecting our business please refer to our Annual Report on Form 20-F filed with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission. A copy of which can be found on the Company's website [www.akzonobel.com](http://www.akzonobel.com).

\*Pursuant to the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act 1995.