



New Agenus Subsidiary, SaponiQx, Builds Innovative Adjuvant Platform and Forms Collaboration with Ginkgo Bioworks

September 10, 2021

Development of saponin molecules designed to provide high-efficacy and long-lasting protection for pandemic vaccines

LEXINGTON, Mass. and BOSTON, Sept. 10, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [Agenus](#) (NASDAQ: AGEN), an immuno-oncology company with an extensive pipeline of checkpoint antibodies, cell therapies, adjuvants, and vaccines designed to activate immune response to cancers and infections today announced the launch of SaponiQx, a subsidiary of Agenus, dedicated to driving innovation in novel adjuvant discovery and vaccine design, and its partnership with Ginkgo Bioworks, Inc. ("Ginkgo"), the leading horizontal platform for cell programming. Ginkgo, which recently announced a business combination with Soaring Eagle Acquisition Corp. (Nasdaq: SRNG), is enabling customers across industries to improve products and manufacturing processes, and to increase efficiency and sustainability, by making biology easier to engineer.

SaponiQx is building an innovative adjuvant platform to deliver both sustainable manufacturing approaches and a secure supply of known adjuvants, as well as discover novel adjuvants and develop new, more effective vaccines utilizing optimized antigen-adjuvant pairings. Adjuvants are substances known to enhance the body's immune response and are a key component of many existing vaccines. Ginkgo's experience in metabolic engineering, enzymatic diversification, and process optimization can be applied to discover novel adjuvants and improve current manufacturing processes that can then be applied toward developing better-integrated vaccines.

"Vaccines are one of the most powerful tools we have to fight pandemics, but ensuring widespread access to efficacious vaccines continues to be a major challenge worldwide," says Jason Kelly, CEO of Ginkgo Bioworks. "We're proud that our platform is being used by companies across the vaccine supply chain to develop and manufacture the materials necessary for life-saving vaccines."

"Agenus is pleased for SaponiQx to collaborate with Ginkgo Bioworks to develop its novel saponin products from sustainably sourced raw materials, with a goal to meet the current demands placed on the vaccine industry for pandemic vaccines," says Garo Armen, CEO and Chairman of Agenus and Executive Chairman of SaponiQx. "QS21 Stimulon™ has shown long term efficacy and long-term protection in both commercially launched and experimental vaccines."

About SaponiQx

SaponiQx plans to be a global, integrated immune-education medicine company which is planning to develop safe and effective immunomodulators to protect the world's population from health threats. Its pipeline is led by the best-in-class QS21 Stimulon™ adjuvant already used in GSK's Shingrix™ vaccine and is expected to include a wide-ranging portfolio of saponin-based adjuvants and vaccines, including AutoSynVax™, PhosphoSynVax™, and Prophage™. SaponiQx is headquartered in Lexington, MA. For more information, please visit www.saponiQx.com and our Twitter handle, @saponiQx.

Contact:

SaponiQx Investor Relations

investor@saponiqx.com

SaponiQx Media Relations

media@saponiqx.com

About Agenus

Agenus is a clinical-stage immuno-oncology company focused on the discovery and development of therapies that engage the body's immune system to fight cancer. The Company's vision is to expand the patient populations benefiting from cancer immunotherapy by pursuing combination approaches that leverage a broad repertoire of antibody therapeutics, adoptive cell therapies (through its MiNK Therapeutics subsidiary), and proprietary cancer vaccine platforms. The Company is equipped with a suite of antibody discovery platforms and a state-of-the-art GMP manufacturing facility with the capacity to support clinical programs. Agenus is headquartered in Lexington, MA. For more information, please visit www.agenusbio.com and our Twitter handle, @agenus_bio. Information that may be important to investors will be routinely posted on our website and on Twitter.

Contact

Agenus Investor Relations

Jan Medina, CFA

Agenus

781-674-4490

Jan.Medina@agenusbio.com

Agenus Media Relations

Kimberly Ha

KKH Advisors

917-291-5744

kimberly.ha@kxhadvisors.com

About Ginkgo Bioworks

Ginkgo is building a platform to enable customers to program cells as easily as we can program computers. The company's platform is enabling biotechnology applications across diverse markets, from food and agriculture to industrial chemicals to pharmaceuticals. Ginkgo has also actively

supported a number of COVID-19 response efforts, including K-12 pooled testing, vaccine manufacturing optimization and therapeutics discovery. In May 2021, Ginkgo announced a business combination with Soaring Eagle Acquisition Corp. (Nasdaq: SRNG), which, if completed, will result in Ginkgo, through a parent entity, Ginkgo Bioworks Holdings, Inc., becoming a public company. The extraordinary general meeting of Soaring Eagle's shareholders in connection with the transaction has been scheduled for September 14, 2021 and the transaction is expected to close shortly thereafter, subject to customary closing conditions. For more information, visit www.ginkgobioworks.com.

MEDIA CONTACT:

press@ginkgobioworks.com

INVESTOR CONTACT:

investors@ginkgobioworks.com

ADDITIONAL LEGAL INFORMATION

Forward-Looking Statements Legend

This document contains certain forward-looking statements within the meaning of the federal securities laws with respect to the proposed transaction between Ginkgo and Soaring Eagle, including statements regarding the anticipated timing of the transaction, the services offered by Ginkgo and the markets in which it operates, and Ginkgo's projected future results. These forward-looking statements generally are identified by the words "believe," "project," "potential," "expect," "anticipate," "estimate," "intend," "strategy," "future," "opportunity," "plan," "may," "should," "will," "would," "will be," "will continue," "will likely result," and similar expressions. Forward-looking statements are predictions, projections and other statements about future events that are based on current expectations and assumptions and, as a result, are subject to risks and uncertainties. Many factors could cause actual future events to differ materially from the forward-looking statements in this document, including but not limited to: (i) the risk that the transaction may not be completed in a timely manner or at all, which may adversely affect the price of Soaring Eagle's securities, (ii) the risk that the transaction may not be completed by Soaring Eagle's business combination deadline and the potential failure to obtain an extension of the business combination deadline if sought by Soaring Eagle, (iii) the failure to satisfy the conditions to the consummation of the transaction, including the adoption of the agreement and plan of merger by the shareholders of Soaring Eagle and Ginkgo, the satisfaction of the minimum trust account amount following redemptions by Soaring Eagle's public shareholders and the receipt of certain governmental and regulatory approvals, (iv) the lack of a third party valuation in determining whether or not to pursue the proposed transaction, (v) the occurrence of any event, change or other circumstance that could give rise to the termination of the agreement and plan of merger, (vi) the effect of the announcement or pendency of the transaction on Ginkgo business relationships, performance, and business generally, (vii) risks that the proposed transaction disrupts current plans of Ginkgo and potential difficulties in Ginkgo employee retention as a result of the proposed transaction, (viii) the outcome of any legal proceedings that may be instituted against Ginkgo or against Soaring Eagle related to the agreement and plan of merger or the proposed transaction, (ix) the ability to maintain the listing of Soaring Eagle's securities on Nasdaq, (x) volatility in the price of Soaring Eagle's securities due to a variety of factors, including changes in the competitive and highly regulated industries in which Ginkgo plans to operate, variations in performance across competitors, changes in laws and regulations affecting Ginkgo's business and changes in the combined capital structure, (xi) the ability to implement business plans, forecasts, and other expectations after the completion of the proposed transaction, and identify and realize additional opportunities, and (xii) the risk of downturns in demand for products using synthetic biology. The foregoing list of factors is not exhaustive. You should carefully consider the foregoing factors and the other risks and uncertainties described in the "Risk Factors" section of Soaring Eagle's proxy statement/prospectus relating to the transaction (the "Proxy Statement"), and in Soaring Eagle's other filings with the SEC. Soaring Eagle and Ginkgo caution that the foregoing list of factors is not exclusive. Soaring Eagle and Ginkgo caution readers not to place undue reliance upon any forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date made. Neither Soaring Eagle nor Ginkgo undertake or accept any obligation or undertaking to release publicly any updates or revisions to any forward-looking statements to reflect any change in its expectations or any change in events, conditions or circumstances on which any such statement is based.

Additional Information and Where to Find It

This document relates to a proposed transaction between Ginkgo and Soaring Eagle. This document does not constitute an offer to sell or exchange, or the solicitation of an offer to buy or exchange, any securities, nor shall there be any sale of securities in any jurisdiction in which such offer, sale or exchange would be unlawful prior to registration or qualification under the securities laws of any such jurisdiction. In connection with the proposed transaction, Soaring Eagle filed a Proxy Statement on August 13, 2021. The Proxy Statement has been sent to all Soaring Eagle shareholders as of the record date of August 10, 2021. Soaring Eagle also will file other documents regarding the proposed transaction with the SEC. Before making any voting decision, investors and security holders of Soaring Eagle and Ginkgo are urged to read the registration statement, the proxy statement/prospectus and all other relevant documents filed or that will be filed with the SEC in connection with the proposed transaction as they become available because they will contain important information about the proposed transaction.

Investors and security holders may obtain free copies of the proxy statement/prospectus and all other relevant documents filed or that will be filed with the SEC by Soaring Eagle through the website maintained by the SEC at www.sec.gov. In addition, the documents filed by Soaring Eagle may be obtained free of charge by written request to Soaring Eagle at 955 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY, 10075, Attention: Eli Baker, Chief Financial Officer, (310) 209-7280.

Participants in Solicitation

Soaring Eagle and Ginkgo and their respective directors and officers may be deemed to be participants in the solicitation of proxies from Soaring Eagle's shareholders in connection with the proposed transaction. Information about Soaring Eagle's directors and executive officers and their ownership of Soaring Eagle's securities is set forth in Soaring Eagle's filings with the SEC. To the extent that holdings of Soaring Eagle's securities have changed since the amounts printed in Soaring Eagle's proxy statement, such changes have been or will be reflected on Statements of Change in Ownership on Form 4 filed with the SEC. Additional information regarding the interests of those persons and other persons who may be deemed participants in the proposed transaction may be obtained by reading the proxy statement/prospectus regarding the proposed transaction when it becomes available. You may obtain free copies of these documents as described in the preceding paragraph.

Genus/SaponiQx Forward Looking Statements:

This press release contains forward-looking statements that are made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the federal securities laws, including statements regarding SaponiQx's business plans, including its collaboration with Ginkgo and its ability to successfully develop its technology, including

its ability to build an adjuvant platform, create and deliver sustainable and improved manufacturing approaches, create a secure supply of known adjuvants, and generate novel or optimized adjuvants and vaccine candidates.. These forward-looking statements are subject to risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially. These risks and uncertainties include, among others, the factors described under the Risk Factors section of our most recent Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q or Annual Report on Form 10-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Agenus cautions investors not to place considerable reliance on the forward-looking statements contained in this release. These statements speak only as of the date of this press release, and Agenus undertakes no obligation to update or revise the statements, other than to the extent required by law. All forward-looking statements are expressly qualified in their entirety by this cautionary statement.