T3 BioScience: **Milwaukee Firm in final tests for Apple, Citrus Biopesticide**

MILWAUKEE—T3 BioScience Inc., a Milwaukee biotech firm and partner with the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee Research Foundation (UWMRF), announced this week that RejuAgro, a groundbreaking biopesticide for apples and citrus, could soon be available for use on U.S. farms.

The company has begun the environmental and toxicological testing required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). It is expected that all mandated EPA studies will be completed by the end of this year.

The company said scientists crafted the biocontrol agent called RejuAgro from natural compounds in the soil. It will protect nine crops, including apples and

citrus, from 11 diseases such as citrus canker and the devastating Huanglongbing (also known as citrus greening).

RejuAgro matches the protection levels of conventional agricultural antibiotics without the negative side effects of antibiotic resistance in bacteria, the company said.

"Culminating five years of dedicated research, our team has developed this revolutionary product poised to rejuvenate the industry. It supports the U.S. economy and meets our country's nutritional needs through eco-friendly disease management in agriculture, marking a significant stride in sustainable farming," said Dr. Ching-Hong Yang, PhD, T3's Chief Science Officer and a professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. "We are buoyed by the partnership with the UWMRF."

T3 CEO Daniel Burgin said with the EPA tests, the company has initiated RejuAgro's final commercialization phase.

"We are proud of the innovation and skills of our scientists and researchers who are working diligently to help farmers and consumers protect crops with stable and highly efficient environmentally friendly products," Burgin said.

T3 said its proprietary discovery methodology helped researchers develop the biocontrol agent in 2018 from a natural metabolite extracted from a novel bacterium in the soil.

Dr. Jessica Silvaggi, PhD in biochemistry and UWMRF President, said the timing of the announcement reflects federal support for the research, adding that Yang and his UW-Milwaukee team were recipients of two USDA grants in July and August, a combined value of $2.4 million, for research into controlling fire blight disease on apples and for research of RejuAgro as a foliar spray and as a trunk injection method to combat citrus greening, a critical challenge in agriculture.

“As a scientist and a consumer, this pioneering T3 invention is very exciting because its historic discovery will revolutionize global crop protection with environmentally friendly substances that will help farmers and protect our health,” Silvaggi said. “UWMRF is delighted to see T3 targeting regulatory product submission in 2024.”

T3 has raised significant funds from private investors to develop RejuAgro and complete the important safety and toxicity studies necessary for use on apple and citrus crops.

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Site Staff

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