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KeyGene™ InnovatorsClub a new strategic initiative for Small and Medium-sized plant breeding Enterprises

KeyGene is pleased to announce that it officially started its new initiative the KeyGene InnovatorsClub. On Friday April 18th, the InnovatorsClub started with its first workshop, including the launch of the KeyGene InnovatorsClub website (www.keygeneinnovatorsclub.com) and the signing of the membership contracts.

The KeyGene InnovatorsClub is a new collaboration platform for plant breeding companies willing to invest in molecular breeding. Members of the KeyGene InnovatorsClub will get access to the molecular breeding technologies, know-how and software solutions build up by KeyGene in the past 19 years, while working with vegetable and field crop breeding companies. The KeyGene InnovatorsClub members will share investment costs and experiences on molecular breeding and quality control strategies.

The initiative offers Small and Medium-sized breeding Enterprises (SME) the opportunity to join forces in the development and implementation of molecular marker technologies for their crop improvement. The KeyGene InnovatorsClub started with five flower breeding companies. In the near future more flower, fruit, tree and field crop breeding companies are expected to join the club. A dedicated alliance manager has been appointed to communicate and provide consultancy for the member companies.

Ir. A.C. van Elsen, Director of Plantum NL, the Dutch association for breeding, tissue culture, production and trading of seeds and young plants: 'The KeyGene InnovatorsClub initiative fits very well with our objectives to stimulate creativity in the industry. Collaboration within the industry is important to face the breeding challenges and the increasing competition in Europe and USA, but also from the new emerging markets like China, India and South America.'

KeyGene's CEO, Prof. Dr. A.J. van Tunen adds: 'The KeyGene InnovatorsClub slogan "join the progress" clearly appeals to many breeding companies given the positive reaction from the field. The KeyGene InnovatorsClub allows companies to respond to the continued consolidation as well as the strong technology alliances that are reality in the plant breeding market. Breeding companies have to face these challenges in a background of fast emerging superpowers such as China, India and South America. The KeyGene InnovatorsClub offers a solid platform for companies to collaborate on the novel technologies enabling the breeding process.'

For more information please contact:

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About KeyGene

Keygene N.V. (www.keygene.com) is an R&D company with the mission to be the leading company in developing and applying DNA expertise in the field of molecular genetics. In recent years KeyGene invested in next generation sequencing platforms such as the Roche GS-FLX system (454 technology) and the Illumina Genome Analyzer (Solexa technology). KeyGene has developed a strong proprietary technology platform based on AFLP[®], a DNA marker technology for genome analysis, transcript profiling and genetic analysis. For diagnostic purposes, SNPWave[®] a multiplexed SNP detection technology was developed. KeyGene exploits its proprietary technologies, databases and know-how through contract research and products for applications in the Life Sciences industry and more specifically in innovative breeding applications such as Breeding by Design[™], CRoPS[™] and KeyPoint[™]. KeyGene's five shareholder companies De Ruiter Seeds, ENZA Zaden, Rijk Zwaan, Vilmorin & Cie and Takii & Co. are major vegetable seed companies. KeyGene has around 120 researchers and staff.

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