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FDA's Plan to Lower Nicotine in Cigarettes Has Captured the Attention of Regulators and Public Health Experts Around the World

Officials in Canada, New Zealand and U.K. are Now Pursuing Nicotine Reduction Policies

CLARENCE, N.Y.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- 22nd Century Group, Inc. (NYSE American: [XXII](#)), a plant biotechnology company that is focused on tobacco harm reduction, announced today that, as reported in [Bloomberg News](#), the landmark plan by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to reduce nicotine in cigarettes to non-addictive levels is prompting authorities in countries outside of the United States to pursue their own nicotine reduction mandates.

The Bloomberg article declares: "After FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb suggested mandating drastic cuts in nicotine levels, public-health experts in New Zealand last week published an action plan recommending such reductions within five years. Canada and Finland say they're looking into regulating amounts of the drug in tobacco products, while officials in the U.K.'s Department of Health have discussed the U.S. proposal with FDA representatives, according to a person familiar with the matter."

The Bloomberg article further states that the FDA has "massively raised the attention on reduced-nicotine cigarettes for regulators across the world," according to Clive Bates, a public health consultant.

The Bloomberg article goes on to point out the fears and limitations of "Big Tobacco" when it reports: "[Philip Morris International Inc.](#)'s Director of Product Policy, Rolf Lutz, last year estimated it would cost the company \$10 billion to \$12 billion to extract nicotine from all the cigarettes it sells across the European Union. Lutz said the cost could be minimized by genetically modifying tobacco plants, but this would take about 20 years."

In contrast, 22nd Century already possesses proven technology to grow tobacco with non-addictive levels of nicotine. The Company has an inventory of Very Low Nicotine tobacco varieties and is currently developing additional, improved Very Low Nicotine tobacco varieties, including non-GMO varieties.

The Bloomberg article concludes with the assertion that the FDA plan could lead to "the most fundamental change the tobacco industry has ever seen," as stated by Matthew Myers, president of anti-smoking group [Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids](#).

"These are very exciting times; public health officials around the world are now actively considering mandates of nicotine levels in tobacco cigarettes made possible by 22nd Century," explained Henry Sicignano, III, President and Chief Executive Officer of 22nd Century Group. "As other countries seek to implement their own reduced nicotine standards, 22nd Century stands ready to partner with any countries – or tobacco companies – that have a genuine interest in improving the health of smokers."

About 22nd Century Group, Inc.

22nd Century is a plant biotechnology company focused on genetic engineering and plant breeding which allows the increase or decrease of the level of nicotine in tobacco plants and the level of cannabinoids in cannabis plants. The Company's primary mission in tobacco is to reduce the harm caused by smoking. The Company's primary mission in cannabis is to develop proprietary hemp/cannabis strains for important new medicines and agricultural crops. Visit www.xxiicentury.com and www.botanicalgenetics.com for more information.

Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements: This press release contains forward-looking information, including all statements that are not statements of historical fact regarding the intent, belief or current expectations of 22nd Century Group, Inc., its directors or its officers with respect to the contents of this press release, including but not limited to our future revenue expectations. The words "may," "would," "will," "expect," "estimate," "anticipate," "believe," "intend" and similar expressions and variations thereof are intended to identify

forward-looking statements. We cannot guarantee future results, levels of activity or performance. You should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date that they were made. These cautionary statements should be considered with any written or oral forward-looking statements that we may issue in the future. Except as required by applicable law, including the securities laws of the United States, we do not intend to update any of the forward-looking statements to conform these statements to reflect actual results, later events or circumstances, or to reflect the occurrence of unanticipated events. You should carefully review and consider the various disclosures made by us in our annual report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016, filed on March 8, 2017, including the section entitled "Risk Factors," and our other reports filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission which attempt to advise interested parties of the risks and factors that may affect our business, financial condition, results of operation and cash flows. If one or more of these risks or uncertainties materialize, or if the underlying assumptions prove incorrect, our actual results may vary materially from those expected or projected.

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