22nd Century Completes Successful Hemp Field Trials with University of Virginia

First harvest identifies proprietary hemp varieties with excellent agronomic qualities

CLARENCE, N.Y.--(BUSINESS WIRE) 22nd Century Group, Inc. (NYSE American: XXII), a plant biotechnology company focused on tobacco harm reduction and cannabis research, announced today that the Company and the University of Virginia (“UVA”) completed their first successful harvest of hemp plants and identified several promising hemp varieties that could form the foundation for commercial hemp production throughout the legacy tobacco belt region of the United States.

The 22nd Century-UVA hemp field trials used multiple oil and fiber varieties of hemp. The Company’s first hemp harvest with UVA identified proprietary varieties of hemp that have excellent agronomic properties for growth in the Commonwealth of Virginia. 22nd Century and UVA will use the most promising varieties for expanded plantings designed to optimize plant growth. 22nd Century is also working with UVA on the development of high-value medicinal cannabinoid varieties and specialized cannabinoid extraction processes for use in human therapeutics.

Dr. Michael Timko, the principal scientific investigator at UVA in the Company’s sponsored hemp program, stated: “We are very excited to harvest our first Virginia-based hemp crops in partnership with 22nd Century. We have learned a lot from this first year’s planting and we are planning to take full advantage of the proposed amendments to Virginia’s industrial hemp laws with expanded plantings in 2018. Our laboratory and greenhouse-based biotechnology projects with 22nd Century’s hemp plants are already underway. Indeed, we have ambitious goals, including the production of cannabinoids for human therapeutics, cannabinoid oils for nutritional purposes, and hemp fiber for industrial uses.”

22nd Century is also coordinating with UVA on the field growth and laboratory testing of zero-THC hemp lines developed by 22nd Century in partnership with its research partner, Anandia Laboratories, in Canada. 22nd Century scientists expect that its second generation zero-THC hemp lines, in combination with other superior hemp plants, will form the basis of future industrial hemp variety development in the United States. In addition, the Company’s on-going phytoremediation project in Virginia will soon yield results in the soil remediation of selected contaminated and compacted mining lands in Virginia.

The changing hemp regulatory framework across the United States continues to create opportunity for 22nd Century. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (“VDACS”) recently announced that it is pursuing legislation to amend Virginia laws to replace the current industrial hemp grower licensure program with a simplified and open registration program for industrial hemp growers. As a result, industry experts anticipate a considerable increase in demand for suitable hemp seed in the Commonwealth of Virginia. 22nd Century is poised to meet this need. Additionally, in the Company’s home state, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo recently announced that the state intends to become a leading grower and producer of hemp and hemp-derived products. To take advantage of the favorable hemp climate in New York, 22nd Century has applied for a New York hemp grower license and looks forward to expanding its Buffalo, NY-based laboratory to include important new hemp research.

“We are delighted with the results of our first industrial hemp field trials in Virginia and with the significant commercial potential these plants represent,” reported Dr. Paul Rushton, Vice President of Plant Biotechnology at 22nd Century. “In 2018, we will add our proprietary zero-THC hemp plants to our hemp program with UVA and we will expand our hemp activities in New York and other areas across the United States; these projects will continue to spotlight 22nd Century as a leader in the rapidly emerging industrial hemp and medical marijuana markets.”
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.xxicentury.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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