

Stanford may dominate gene-splicing field

By Campus Digest News Service

The first patent on DNA gene-splicing has been awarded to Stanford University, and could have widespread effects on commercial use of gene-splicing techniques.

The patent is on the splicing methods of Dr. Stanley Cohen of Stanford and Professor Herbert Boyer of the University of California at San Francisco.

The new patent appears to be very broad, and covers the new technology of breaking down the barriers between species by altering the genes of bacteria.

More than a dozen new companies have sprung up recently to commercially exploit the new gene-splicing discoveries.

Stanford's patent, however, may turn out to be broad enough in the basics of gene-splicing that they may be able to license any use of their vital techniques.

This will give Stanford considerable influence over the use of gene altering, and possibly hundreds of millions of dollars in royalties from commercial development of the new field.

Royalties will probably be considered on a sliding scale of 1/2% to 5% of the sales of those firms they "license," according to Stanford officials.

Stanford will also require licensed companies to adhere to the safety guidelines of the National Institute of Health, which involves considerable red-tape of the company.

Stanford had been working on its patent application for six years with the government, and finally received it in December.

Altering genes can give an organism new abilities, and can eventually make it possible to alter or handpick the traits of larger organisms such as animals and humans.

According to attorneys for drug companies already involved in the new gene-splicing field when Stanford got its patent, the new patent involves techniques nearly each of their firms must use in their work.

A loop-hole has been discovered in the patent, however. Because the two researchers published their findings before the patent application was filed, the patent provides protection only in the United States, not overseas.

Large, multi-national companies are therefore in the position to move their plants out of the US to avoid the Stanford patent and requirements placed on licensed companies. If Stanford becomes too difficult to deal with, companies are expected to move overseas.

Products manufactured overseas could be shipped back to the US for sale, circumventing Stanford's patent.

Stanford is working on this problem by urging US patent protection against the products of their research within this country, not just the manufacturing methods that their patent already covers.

Another problem for Stanford is that their patent covers basic research that was done several years ago, and their invention of these methods is many steps away from the products and commercial uses it seeks to license.

Other methods might be found to achieve the same ends. Other companies are also filing patent applications for gene-splicing methods, which could lead to conflicting claims and scores of lawsuits over a new and potentially gigantic new commercial pursuit.

Commenting on possible lawsuits against the school, Stanford patent attorney says "Once the large corporations sign up, the small ones usually do... Since most corporations worry about PR, they don't like to sue a university."

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PERSONAL



ROB, ED, and HARRY: Thanks for the Valentines. RMR

HLB* 1) What does **WHITE ROSE** mean? 2) Thanks for almost coming to my rescue on Tuesday. You're a real friend. 3) ... And I don't owe you a back rub so forget it. Mountain Woman

DUCH, Where's my mug? You drunk alcoholic! Rosanne

Annette, Hope you had a good V.D. (or haven't) Linda

P.B. at A-1 State College—First it was John and "Babs," then Eddie and Mary Lynn. Next it is you and me. 470 days and counting down. With love 4-ever, 306

Dear Sagittarian—You don't have to worry about Pat—she's not my type. She's not seeing Charlie anymore! She phoned to tell me. You know how my horns get excited over you... Just The Way You Are. Let's keep things happy. Also: thanx for helping run the board last weekend. A Communicating Rhino

NANCY, Do you really have an oral fixation? Fred

A.E.I.C.S.M.S.—What's new? Suppose you're still studying "Trash-2." Don't worry, it's almost over. Just think, 43 weeks 'til we'll graduate and become unemployed! Missed you last Friday night on the "air." Hi to M & D—S.I.W.H.

G.M.—What happened to the "Great Escape"? You know we eat it up!—B&D

Baby Doll—To the future Mrs. B. Thank you very much for a fabulous weekend. I hope we have many more in the future. Now that our love for each other is secure, there will be no more hidden fears and secrets. "Our love will climb any mountain." "You're all I'll ever need... you're all I'll ever want." Love, Bad

B.C.—Concerning the award: It takes one to know one! Keep playing ball with your usual "excellence."—F.O.T.W.

M.W.—Hooray for Willis and similar secondary sources!--U.D.

To A-1 State College—4/5/81—New York Rangers vs. Flyers without Espo, and with "Duggie." Just me, you, D.R. and 306 in Philly. Don't forget!

S. S.—Wall dismantling is my specialty. Give it time to grow and enjoy the beauty of it. A.E.

P.B.—We're accounting on you to drop it while you can. --I.C.

FLIP — Just thought I would say hi to a good backgammon player and drinking buddy. Sparky

COCO— It was enjoyable defeating you in bowling, but I wish you would have done better anyway. Good Luck next week. Spongy Beer Hugger

MOUNTAIN WOMAN — Are you all right? It's not my concern, but these are "troubled times." (RED ROSE, WHITE ROSE) HLB

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