



Contact:
Janet Bosserman
R/P Marketing Public Relations
(419)241-2221
jbosserman@r-p.com

Sponsor a Spring Point Project pig for the holidays

Within two years, cells from pigs may be used in clinical trials on a path to finally cure diabetes

December, 2007 – MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. – With the season of giving upon us, are you struggling to find the perfect gift for a loved one? If so, ponder this: You could improve the lives of those afflicted with [diabetes](#) simply by participating in the [Spring Point Project](#) (www.springpointproject.org) [Sponsor a Pig Program](#) on a loved one's behalf for a day, week, quarter or year.

Spring Point Project, a non-profit organization, is working in partnership with the Diabetes Institute for Immunology and Transplantation at the University of Minnesota to develop a [cure for type-1 diabetes](#) that will be widely available and affordable.

At its Diabetes Research and Wellness Foundation Islet Resource Facility in western Wisconsin, Spring Point Project is working to realize the potential cure by raising a supply of donor pigs under ultra-clean, or 'biosecure' conditions. Within the next two years, when the cure is slated to enter clinical trials, insulin-producing islet cells from these 'medical-grade' pigs are to be transplanted into human patients with the disease – freeing them from the burdens of daily insulin administration and complications caused by insufficient blood sugar levels.

But raising high-health pigs is extremely expensive. "It costs nearly \$50 a day, per pig, to maintain our pigs in the type of environment that will make their islet cells suitable for transplantation," explains [Dr. Henk-Jan Schuurman](#), CEO of Spring Point Project. "The animals must be housed in a highly specialized environment, maintained by professionals who are trained in animal health care, eat special food, drink purified water, and breathe filtered air."

-more-

Sponsor a Spring Point Project pig for the holidays, Page 2

The potential cure was discovered by [Dr. Bernhard Hering](#), Scientific Director of the Diabetes Institute for Immunology & Transplantation at the University of Minnesota, who documented a [medical breakthrough](#) in the prestigious journal *Nature Medicine* in March of 2006. The key finding was that the transplantation of islet cells, harvested from the pancreas of a pig, yields a long-term cure for diabetes in monkeys, opening the path to unprecedented new opportunities for human patients with diabetes.

Sponsor a Pig Program participants may commit at any of the following levels.

- A day \$50
- A week \$350
- A month \$1,500
- A quarter \$4,500
- A year \$18,000

To sponsor a pig for the holidays, visit the Spring Point Project Web site to complete a [form](#) (<http://www.springpointproject.org/images/spt0026-PledgeForm.pdf>).

Spring Point Project is a nonprofit organization that is working to expedite the affordable and widespread availability of islet tissue for diabetes care by developing premier source pigs for islet Xenotransplantation. Spring Point Project and the University of Minnesota work in partnership to provide the source and science needed to move toward a cure for diabetes.

The Diabetes Research and Wellness Foundation, a not-for-profit worldwide network based in Washington, D.C., has made a substantial contribution to Spring Point Project by donating \$6.2 million to fund research and operations at Spring Point Project.

Additionally, Spring Point Project has received \$3 million in donations from Pat and Ann Ryan and Jim and Colleen Ryan. Their donations included personal gifts and contributions through Ryan Companies US, Inc.

To contact Spring Point Project, visit www.springpointproject.org. To contact Diabetes Research & Wellness Foundation, visit www.diabeteswellness.net. To contact the University of Minnesota Diabetes Institute for Immunology and Transplantation, visit www.diabetesinstitute.org.

###