



## **KeyGene and Kultevat reach milestones in Russian dandelion natural rubber**

ST. LOUIS, Mo and WAGENINGEN, The Netherlands; March 25, 2014 -- U.S. biotech company Kultevat and KeyGene, an international molecular genetics company specializing in agricultural biotechnology, have developed the first Russian dandelion lines that can be tested and used for latex extraction. Following a rigorous breeding strategy leveraging its molecular and DNA tools, KeyGene produced improved Russian dandelion lines with superior agronomic performance, latex quality and yields.

In April, 2013, Kultevat and KeyGene entered into collaboration developing, breeding and testing Russian dandelion for the production of natural rubber. A recent capital investment will enable Kultevat to finance its testing, cultivation and production program. Kultevat plans to coordinate all activities related to dandelion production for natural rubber through its new U.S. R&D facility in St Louis, Mo.

In parallel to this program, KeyGene has also cross-bred Russian dandelion and European common dandelion plants resulting in new breeding material with heavily increased vigor and tap root size. The inter-specific dandelion lines are now being tested for latex and rubber yields and quality. These tests will provide suitable material to launch further breeding, seed production and, ultimately, cultivation for latex and rubber production. Quality seeds from these superior lines have been produced, processed and delivered to Kultevat who will develop production practices and latex extraction procedures to establish Russian dandelion rubber production in North America.

“With these R&D investments, KeyGene and Kultevat are showing our commitment to collaboratively develop dandelion as a new crop for rubber production,” said Kultevat CEO Daniel Swiger.

“These dandelion innovations will significantly contribute to solving the worldwide need for increased natural rubber production and diversification, that have until now been solely derived from one species, the Hevea tree, which grows in only a few major production areas,” said KeyGene CEO Arjen van Tunen.

### **About KeyGene**

KeyGene is a privately owned, innovative molecular genetics Ag Biotech company with a primary focus on the improvement of 6F (Food, Feed, Fiber, Fuel, Flowers and Fun) crops. KeyGene’s passion is a Green Gene Revolution approach to explore and exploit natural genetic variation in vegetable and other 6F crops. KeyGene delivers sustainable responses to the world’s needs for yield stability & quality of vegetable and field crops. It supports its strategic partners with cutting edge breeding technologies and plant-based trait platforms to meet their needs. KeyGene performs strategic and applied research with more than 135 employees from all over the world, with state of the art facilities and equipment.

KeyGene has its headquarters in Wageningen, the Netherlands, a subsidiary in Rockville, USA and a Joint Lab with the Shanghai Institute of Biological Sciences in Shanghai, China.

### **About Kultevat**

Kultevat is a privately-held company headquartered in St. Louis, Mo. Kultevat serves sustainable agricultural markets, primarily by the production of rubber and mixed sugar feedstocks for the biofuels market. Kultevat has vast experience in the commercial utilization of plant materials to develop profitable, sustainable, and environmentally-benign sources of rubber, while simultaneously supplying the biofuels industry. Kultevat serves to reduce near-total dependence on foreign sources of rubber globally. Visit [www.kultevat.com](http://www.kultevat.com).

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