

## **Haemoglobin from alfalfa**

In Canada, Medicago Inc. and Hemosol, a pharma biotech concern specializing in haemoglobin replacement products, have signed a manufacturing agreement for the production of recombinant molecules using alfalfa plants as a living factory. Under the agreement, Medicago will develop a plant line producing haemoglobin, grow plant populations and perform basic manipulations to recover the purified proteins for bioactivity and conformity testing. Hemosol retains first rights to negotiate for large-scale commercial supply of the purified haemoglobin.

Medicago expects to have 15 molecules on the bench in 2001 and at least twenty more in 2002. This pipeline will bring to market at least two pharma products per year starting from 2005, and more than two non-pharma products per year by 2004. Medicago is currently discussing alliances with nearly 20 enterprises/laboratories throughout North America, Western Europe and Japan. (AgBiotech Reporter, March 2001)