

JAPAN ROUNDUP

Nippon Chemical Research is planning to develop a monoclonal antibody-based ointment to treat herpes simplex. The company has cloned the gene coding for the antibody, and intends to introduce it into monkey renal cells. Nippon plans to begin mass production at its new genetic engineering laboratory in Kobe City.

Yukio Gosei Kogyo Co. has developed a high-quality technique for effective identification of long DNA sequences, using the reagent dideoxyribonucleoside - 5' - triphosphate. The first such method developed in Japan, it is being marketed by Yoshitomi Pharmaceutical Industries, Ltd.

Earth Chemical Co. and Shizuoka College of Pharmacy have mass produced epithelial growth factor (EGF) at levels of 42.7 mg per liter of culture medium. The method produced purified EGF simply and effectively. Wakunaga Pharmaceutical has also developed a new EGF production method with the University of Tokyo.

While their method currently yields less than the former's, Wakunaga intends to improve productivity.

A research group at The National Institute of Agrobiological Resources of the MAFF was recently the first to separate glutenin DNA of rice and to identify its sequence. The results may improve future rice plants.

Toyojozo Co. Ltd. (Shizuoka-ken) and Kyowa Hakko Kogyo Co. Ltd. (Tokyo) have developed animal cell culture as part of MITI's Research and Development of Basic Technology for Future Industries program. Toyojozo has achieved the efficient accretion of cells onto micro-carriers, and Kogyo has developed a high-density cell culture system called the "perfusion incubator."

Yamasa Shoyu Co. (Chiba-ken), a major soy producer, has produced monoclonal antibodies to mouse alpha-interferon and mouse beta-interferon. Immuno-Monitoring Center,

Yamasa Shoyu's affiliate, will market the products.

Toray Industries, Inc. (Tokyo) has recently begun clinical tests in the U.S.S.R., China, and East European countries on its beta-interferon. Exports to Italy have already begun.

Sumitomo Pharmaceuticals Co. (Osaka) has synthesized a new anticancer agent, an anthracycline antibiotic called "SM-5887." Large amounts of the agent administered to nude mice proved effective against mammary, gastric, and lung cancers, and demonstrated fewer side effects than conventional equivalents. The company will be conducting clinical tests on the new agent and claims that oral administration is possible.

The Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries' (MAFF) National Institute of Animal Health and Toyobo Co. Ltd. (Osaka) are conducting joint research on purification and mass production of transcriptase.

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