

CertusBio secures \$4.6m to fast-track global plans for waste minimising technology

CertusBio has secured a \$4.6m investment to accelerate plans for growth in New Zealand and globally. The Christchurch-based company offers biosensor technology to food producers that improves production efficiencies and reduces the cost of treating wastewater.

CertusBio CEO, Matthew Jones said the investment led by Pacific Channel, New Zealand's leading early-stage, deep-tech investor, provides the company a significant opportunity to expand into North America.

Other investors include Lincoln Agritech, the original founders of the technology, the Impact Enterprise Fund - New Zealand's first domestically focused impact investment fund, NZ Growth Capital Partners through their Aspire NZ Seed Fund and a group of existing investors.

"This is a very exciting time for CertusBio," said Dr Jones. "Our plans include appointing a US based executive to establish a presence and drive global sales of the patented technology. We've been working for two years to secure a partnership with US based process technology company Relco and will start a trial integration of our automated system into the Valley Queen Cheese plant, South Dakota with support from Relco.

"The 'lab on a chip' technology we've developed continuously monitors production losses during processing which means adjustments can be made in real-time, at the source to improve plant efficiency and increase commercial returns to the company.

"The other significant benefit of the technology is to our environment. Commercial food processing facilities, such as dairy, beer and wine, fruit and vegetables, that use water during processing typically lose at least 5% of their product. This is not only inefficient and costly to the company, but these losses often end up in our rivers and landfills and, if they're not managed properly, can be extremely harmful to our environment.

"Our aim is to turn good food producers into great food processors so they can reach their full potential – for people and the planet. Through the use of real-time monitoring, we have been working with customers to identify the source of losses and generate efficiency gains and additional environmental benefits.

"We've recently completed a New Zealand based operational trial at a Fonterra. This successfully demonstrated the system reliably monitors and detects lactose losses in a commercial processing environment and has been instrumental in our global expansion plans," said Dr Jones.

Pacific Channel partner Kieran Jina said "The team at CertusBio have demonstrated they have a strong ability to increase sustainability and achieve significant improvements in food processing.

"Our investment recognises the full productization achieved by CertusBio and the scalability of the technology across a range of other process industries including chemical, oil & gas, mining, pulp & paper, and wastewater treatment. We're thrilled to be investing in this breakthrough technology and be part of CertusBio's global expansion," said Mr Jina.

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About CertusBio:

Led by CEO Matthew Jones, CertusBio was established in 2015 to commercialise the industry-first, automated process monitoring technology.

Developed by an international research consortium including Lincoln Agritech, Leibniz Institute for Plant Genetics and Crop Plant Research, University of Auckland, Cawthron Institute, Lund University and Ara Institute of Canterbury, the technology is capable of detecting losses and optimising production potential while transitioning industrial processing companies to a more sustainable model of production.

CertusBio have completed robust trials with two of New Zealand's leading dairy processors and will now focus on implementing the innovative monitoring system with food processing companies across the globe, helping them operate with more certainty.

<https://certusbio.com/>

About Pacific Channel:

Pacific Channel is New Zealand's leading early-stage investment firm focused on providing New Zealand based technology start-ups, that have a technical proof of concept and the potential to make a substantial impact, with the resources, expertise, and networks necessary to accelerate growth and navigate the complex commercialisation pathway to achieve success in global markets.

In 2020, Pacific Channel successfully closed its second investment fund - Fund II, a \$55m investment vehicle which will be used to invest in up to 25 kiwi companies which focus on four key areas: future of food, health, clean-tech and advanced engineering and manufacturing innovation in New Zealand.

Existing portfolio companies include Orbis Diagnostics, Vortex Power Systems, InsituGen, Geo40, CertusBio, Somnaceutics (sold to New Image Group) and Engender Technologies (sold to CRV).

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