Fujifilm to acquire leading companies of cell culture media
Maximizing synergies and further expanding the bio-medical business

03.04.2018 - FUJIFILM Corporation has announced that it is acquiring all the outstanding shares of Irvine Scientific Sales Company, Inc. (ISUS) and IS JAPAN CO., LTD., (ISJ) leading companies in cell culture media, and signed a stock purchase agreement for about US$800 million.

In recent years, there has been increased interest in culture media and are essential for cell culturing in the R&D and manufacturing of biopharmaceuticals and regenerative medicine products. The quality of the culture medium can influence the quality and efficiency of cell culturing. The market for cell culture media is expanding following the dramatic growth in the demand for biopharmaceuticals centered around antibody drugs and the increasing need for treatments using cells, and its annual growth is expected to be approximately 10% going forward.

ISUS and ISJ are leading companies in cell culture media with a wide range of products including culture media for biopharmaceutical production, in vitro fertilization and cell therapy. These companies can develop the optimal custom culture media to meet the customers’ needs by utilizing their extensive capabilities in quality control, research and development, and their proven track record and know-how accumulated over the years. The culture media are manufactured at sites that are in compliance with cGMP standards, and are capable of delivering high-quality products in a timely manner. ISUS distributes mainly in the U.S. and Europe, while ISJ distributes mainly in Japan and Asia, providing culture media to pharmaceutical companies, bio-ventures, and academia around the world.

To advance its growth strategies in the healthcare area, Fujifilm continues to invest in contract development and manufacturing of biopharmaceuticals and regenerative medicine. At FUJIFILM Diosynth Biotechnologies (FDB), manufacturing capacity for antibody drugs has been increased. Cellular Dynamics International, Inc. (CDI) is now a wholly owned subsidiary, and to enter the cell culture media business, Fujifilm acquired Wako Pure Chemical Industries, Ltd. (Wako Pure Chemical), a leading reagent manufacturer. With acquisition of ISUS and ISJ, Fujifilm will now be able to provide a broad product portfolio from biopharmaceuticals to in vitro fertilization and cell therapy, strengthening its global business. Utilizing its advanced chemical synthesis and design capabilities cultivated in the photographic film business and the cell preparation and culturing technologies of its group companies such as Japan Tissue Engineering Co., Ltd. (J-TEC), CDI and FDB, Fujifilm will accelerate the development of highly competitive cell culture media, supporting the further growth of its cell culture media business.
Further, by combining the Fujifilm Group's bio-medical-related technologies and products with the cell culture media technologies and products of ISUS and ISJ, the company will maximize the synergies in areas other than the cell culture media business as well. The expected synergies are 1) the further expansion of the contact development and manufacturing business for biopharmaceuticals, 2) the acceleration of research and development in the area of regenerative medicine, and 3) the further expansion of reagent business.

In addition, in order to promptly respond to biomedical customer needs that will further continue to increase, In the first half of fiscal year ending March 2019, Fujifilm will establish a new site for the marketing of products and services that support the research and development, and manufacturing of new drugs in Boston, U.S.A., in addition to the current FDB, CDI, Wako Pure Chemical, and IS-US U.S.A. sites. At the Boston site Fujifilm will respond to the evolving needs of pharmaceutical manufacturers, bio-ventures, and academia by utilizing the combined strengths of the group, thereby further enhancing customer satisfaction and recognition in the bio-medical industry. On April 1, 2018, CDI was renamed “FUJIFILM Cellular Dynamics, Inc.”, while Wako Pure Chemical was renamed “FUJIFILM Wako Pure Chemical Corporation.”