



**For Immediate Release – February 22, 2011**

**CERES NANOSCIENCES AWARDED FUNDING TO DEVELOP UNIVERSAL SAMPLE PREPARATION TOOL FOR RIFT VALLEY FEVER VIRUS**

MANASSAS, Va.--- Ceres Nanosciences, in collaboration with George Mason University's National Center for Biodefense and Infectious Diseases, has been awarded \$250,000 from the National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense (FAZD) to develop a transformative technology platform to address the need for the improved detection of Rift Valley Fever Virus (RVFV) and other foreign and zoonotic diseases.

This study will use the Ceres-patented Nanotrap® technology to develop a simple, reliable and accurate diagnostic tool for RVFV that can be used by medical personnel without highly specialized training or equipment. This development effort will provide a powerful and low-cost platform technology that can be easily extended to other infectious disease applications.

"The Ceres Nanotrap technology presents an ideal solution for the detection of RVFV with a simple yet highly sensitive and specific test. Current methods of RVFV detection are limited by detection sensitivity, which can result in misdiagnosis of infected animals or humans or may require complex sample processing prior to analysis," explains Ben Lepene, Research Director for Ceres Nanosciences.

George Mason University's National Center for Biodefense and Infectious Diseases is focused on the development of innovative techniques and products using Nanotrap technology for the detection and diagnosis of infectious diseases. Mason's internationally recognized infectious disease experts will perform critical validation experiments with Rift Valley Fever Virus infected samples within Mason's recently commissioned biocontainment laboratories.

"Receipt of this grant is only the beginning of what we anticipate will be a long and productive relationship with Ceres Nanosciences. It also serves as an excellent example of this George Mason University laboratory's potential for teaming with and attracting other biotech laboratories to the Northern Virginia area," says Charles Bailey, Executive Director of the National Center for Biodefense and Infectious Diseases.

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## **About Ceres Nanosciences, Inc**

Ceres Nanosciences is a privately held company focused on the development of research and diagnostic products using its unique and proprietary Nanotrap® capture particle technology. Ceres' business goals are to develop a number of commercial applications of the Nanotrap® for high-demand diagnostics and other needs in the life science industry.

## **About the Biomedical Research Laboratory at George Mason University**

This recently constructed \$50M Biomedical Research Laboratory at George Mason University was partially financed with funds competitively awarded by the National Institutes of Health. The facility is staffed and managed by the National Center for Biodefense and Infectious Diseases, which is a research center within the College of Science. The laboratory was designed to play a critical role in advancing research related to infectious diseases. The laboratory's mission is to develop and test products to detect, diagnose, prevent and treat newly emerging infectious diseases, as well as those that could be used as weapons against U.S. interests.

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