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# Pigs Are Healthy and Thriving at Spring Point Project

**April 29, 2009 – MINNEAPOLIS, Minn**. – Spring Point Project is monitoring the influenza A (H1N1) outbreak and is confident that its high health 'medical grade pigs' at the Diabetes Research and Wellness Foundation (DRWF) Islet Research Facility are healthy and thriving due to the strict operational procedures used in breeding and raising the pigs since the inception of the project.

"Concern about the influenza outbreak may lead people to question whether our pig herd could be involved. We can say with confidence based on the strict precautions and diagnostic methods which characterize our work, that we raise our pigs in a biosecure environment and neither the pigs nor the humans working with them are at any increased risk," says Henk-Jan Schuurman, Ph.D., Spring Point Project CEO. "The health of our staff and the pigs are our highest priority because our mission is to provide islet cells for transplantation in humans as a potential cure for diabetes. We are confident we have taken optimal precautions even considering the present outbreak of influenza A (H1N1)."

Spring Point Project currently houses over 100 pigs at the DRWF Islet Resource Facility. Biosecure measures include:

- Our pigs are raised in a biosecure environment to protect them from any infectious agents.
- Our pigs are fed a special sterilized feed which contains no animal fat or protein.
- Air is filtered and water is disinfected to ensure the health status of the pigs.
- Human contact with the pigs is limited to only a few staff members. They are trained in using appropriate protective methods including showering in/out with microbial soap and wearing specialized garments.
- Many other precautions, which were instituted at the inception of the DRWF facility in 2006, are strictly performed.

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Spring Point Project in collaboration with the Schulze Diabetes Institute of the University of Minnesota expects FDA approval allowing clinical trials with pig islet cells within a year.

Spring Point Project, headquartered in Minneapolis, MN, is working to expedite the affordable and widespread availability of islet tissue for diabetes cure by developing premier source pigs for islet xenotransplantation. Spring Point Project works in partnership with the Schulze Diabetes Institute at the University of Minnesota to provide the source and science needed to move toward a cure for diabetes. www.springpointproject.org

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