
Vienna Pharms Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
Gov. Tommy G. Thompson
Deforest, Wisconsin
October 25, 1999

Thank you, Gerard Van Beynum, for that kind introduction and thank you for bringing this tremendous technology to Deforest and the great state of Wisconsin.

I'd also like to recognize:

- George Hersbach, CEO of the Pharming Group
- Dale Schwartz, CEO of Infigen
- Mike Bishop, vice president of Infigen
- And Mark Clarke, the local farm manager of this new facility, Vienna Pharms

I'm pleased to be here as we stand in front of the world's first pharmaceutical farm ... Vienna Pharms. For today we celebrate, as Wisconsin and this rural community of Deforest make history.

Inside these buildings cloned calves will be raised in a secure environment so that their milk can later be used to develop medicines that will treat people suffering from illness throughout the world.

In 1968, a man named Arthur Clarke predicted in the year 2000 that technological developments would eliminate 99 percent of human activity, leaving our descendants with a future of ... pardon the pun ... udder boredom.

Together, we are certainly proving Arthur Clarke wrong.

What we are unveiling today is an exciting new technological development that will not only allow people to live longer and healthier lives but help bolster an already burgeoning Wisconsin economy.

As we welcome new technological advancements, specifically opening our doors to biotechnology, we are opening the door to prosperity for people all across the state.

That wasn't true 13 years ago, but we have worked hard to turn our floundering economy into one that is the envy of the nation.

Our success in the next 13 years and beyond will depend on our ability to diversify, to remain on the cutting edge of new industry, to take advantage of new discoveries and translate those discoveries into viable job creating businesses.

Which is exactly what is happening right here on this 23-acre plot of land in Deforest with the opening of Vienna Pharms.

It will add new jobs to one of Wisconsin's most technologically advanced rural communities. And it will attract worldwide attention as pharmaceuticals are developed that will treat disorders like Pompe's disease, arthritis and hemophilia, and lessen the effects of intestinal infections, and bone and tissue damage.

Wisconsin has long been considered a leader in the agribusiness industry and the creation of Vienna Pharms is another example of our business leaders understanding the importance of making significant investments in new technology and equipment.

The state has also clearly recognized the importance of making investments today that will mean a healthy, vibrant state as we approach the new millennium.

Our new state budget will build on that philosophy making a \$30 million investment in attracting and retaining star faculty in areas of science and biotechnology at the UW-Madison, so we can continue to spur the kind of technological advancements that will be taking place here at Vienna Pharms. It's best known as the UW-Madison initiative.

And we will be investing another \$1 million to set up an incubator on campus to transfer that groundbreaking research into the private sector.

It's an investment that will help researchers leverage private dollars and drive discoveries that lead to the opening of successful business ventures such as this one we are cutting the ribbon for today.

In fact, our world-renowned UW-Madison is spinning off 12 companies a year that are engaged in biotechnology or advanced genetic research. And the tremendous investment we are making in this biennial budget will expand that even further in the 21st century.

As we approach the new millennium, I'm confident the state of Wisconsin will continue to be looked upon as a national and as a world leader. It will only happen with the continued partnership of cutting-edge companies like Infigen and the Pharming Group.

All eyes will be on Deforest and Vienna Pharms in the coming months, and years as new pharmaceuticals are developed from the animals that will be housed inside these buildings.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2:
Gubernatorial Speeches

The opportunities truly are endless as we turn the corner into a new century. And it's of no surprise to any of us here today that the great state of Wisconsin is leading the way.

Thank you.