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Hexima's cutting-edge glasshouse facility officially opened at La Trobe University

Hexima's new \$2 million glasshouse facility located at La Trobe University's Research and Development Park in Bundoora was officially opened today by Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP, Federal Member for Calwell and Chair of the Standing Committee on Innovation, Industry and Science.

Hexima, Australia's first listed agricultural biotechnology company develops innovative technologies to increase agricultural productivity. The Company's leading development program targets fungal disease in the major crops, corn and soy, with global partner, DuPont subsidiary, Pioneer Hi-Bred International. Fungal disease causes losses in corn yields worth more than US\$8 billion in the Americas alone.

Hexima's impressive 1200 square metre facility houses Australia's leading corn transformation facility. It is crucial to the success of Hexima's development of products to combat fungal disease. The new corn transformation and tissue culture facility contains extensive glasshouse space, growth rooms and laboratories for tissue culture and analysis.

Hexima's Chief Science Officer, Professor Marilyn Anderson, said, 'The opening of Hexima's new glasshouse facility represents a very important juncture in the development of our fungal disease technology. As part of our disease program with Pioneer we will generate a large number of transgenic corn plants with our antifungal genes. This facility will give us the capability of producing and testing thousands of plants each year.

The Victorian Government and La Trobe University are investing \$288 million in a world-class centre for agricultural biosciences research and development at a site adjacent to the new Hexima facility. The Federal government and the University are also investing \$94.3million in the new La Trobe Institute of Molecular Sciences (LIMS) which will accommodate the Hexima gene discovery team.

'With the development of two major research centres, AgriBio and LIMS, La Trobe University is increasingly known as the hub of science and innovation in Melbourne's North. We are thrilled that Hexima recognises the benefits of building their footprint on our Melbourne campus,' said La Trobe University Vice Chancellor, Professor Paul Johnson.

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