

Nematodes successfully launched into space for first ever agricultural bio-control experiment on ISS

Hard working beneficial nematodes are finally on their way to the International Space Station

MERRITT ISLAND, FL, UNITED STATES, December 8, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Pheronym, a bio-ag-tech pest control company, announced today that its first-ever agricultural bio-control experiment featuring beneficial nematodes is on its way to the [International Space Station \(ISS\)](#) U.S. National Laboratory after a successful launch today at the Kennedy Space Center. The nematodes were on a SpaceX Falcon9 rocket on December 5, 2019, [launching the 21st Dragon spacecraft](#) mission on its 19th commercial resupply delivery flight to the ISS. The science will focus on Pheronym's breakthrough nematode bio-remediation technology and determine the impact that space travel has on the ability of beneficial nematodes to effectively manage pest control as well as other benefits for agriculture here on Earth. The [nematodes reached the ISS](#) on SpaceX Dragon capsule on Sunday, December 8 at 5:05 AM Eastern Time.



SpaceX CRS 19 Dragon capsule approaches to the ISS



The research is sponsored by the ISS National Lab, who partners with NASA to utilize research allocation aboard the orbiting laboratory. Once aboard the space station, the project itself will be conducted inside of a NanoRacks' NanoLab. NanoRacks, a for-profit hardware facility partner that supports research on the space station, will manage the manifesting, NASA safety review, integration, launch logistics, and on-orbit operations. All of this will be done in coordination with, and under the ISS National Lab flight allocation.

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It's a scientist's dream come true.”

Dr. Fatma Kaplan, Project Director and CEO of Pheronym

“For agriculture to work in space we must have sustainable, non-toxic methodologies for pest control,” said Dr. David Shapiro-Ilan, Co-Project Director and

Research Entomologist at the USDA. “Pheronym's proven approach to bioremediation has great

promise of being an important part of that solution and advances our fundamental understanding of parasitism and pathogenesis.”

“It’s a scientist’s dream come true,” said Dr. Fatma Kaplan, Project Director and CEO of Pheronym. “We thank the USDA, NASA and the ISS for the privilege and opportunity to move our science forward for the benefit of agriculture on our planet and beyond.”



To commemorate the achievement of this first-ever experiment, Pheronym, in conjunction with the ISS National Lab, has approved an official mission patch, which can be seen at www.astronematode.com.

For more information and to see how you can participate in the mission, follow @AstroNematode on social media (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram) and support our crowdfunding campaign. Proceeds will fund continued experiments and commercialization of Pheronym’s technology.

About Pheronym:

Award-winning Pheronym is an ag-biotech pest management company that enables sustainable farming through its novel platform of nematode pheromones. Based in MERRITT ISLAND, Florida and DAVIS, California, the company uses a new pheromone to control plant-parasitic nematodes (microscopic roundworms) in an eco-friendly way and enhances beneficial nematodes’ efficacy to eliminate pest insects. Learn more at www.pheronym.com.

About NanoRacks:

NanoRacks LLC, an XO Markets company, is the world’s first commercial space station company with an existing customer base. The company offers low-cost, high-quality solutions to the most pressing needs for satellite deployment, basic and educational research, and more – both at home and in over 30 nations worldwide. Since 2009, Texas-based NanoRacks has truly created new markets and ushered in a new era of in space-services, dedicated to making space just another place to do business.

About the International Space Station (ISS) U.S. National Laboratory:

In 2005, Congress designated the U.S. portion of the ISS as the nation’s newest national laboratory to optimize its use for improving quality of life on Earth, promoting collaboration among diverse users, and advancing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. This unique laboratory environment is available for use by non-NASA U.S. government agencies, academic institutions, and the private sector. The ISS National Lab manages access to the permanent microgravity research environment, a powerful vantage point in low Earth orbit, and the extreme and varied conditions of space.

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