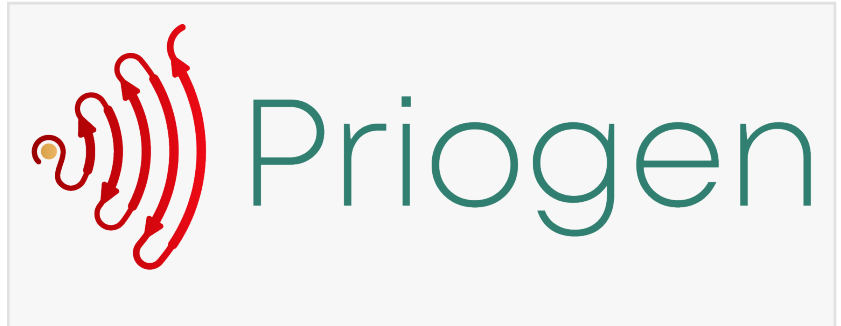


University of Minnesota Startup, Priogen Corp, Specializes in Ultra-Sensitive Chronic Wasting Disease Prion Detection

Priogen's technology and service portfolio provides unprecedented options for Chronic Wasting Disease surveillance and management.



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/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Priogen Corp](#), a

company specializing in next-generation prion diagnostic services and technologies, announced today the successful execution of a license agreement from the University of Minnesota. The agreement expands Priogen's diverse technology portfolio to include portable diagnostic platforms and environmental surveillance options for prion and protein-misfolding diseases. Priogen's flagship services provide a new generation of advanced testing options for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), a fatal prion disease of deer, elk, caribou, and moose that is spreading across North America and Scandinavia.

CWD is caused by infectious proteins called prions which are transmitted through both direct (animal-to-animal) and indirect (environment-to-animal) routes. Infected animals shed prions into the environment where they can persist for years, contributing to the spread of the disease and significantly complicating management efforts. Research shows that even plants can uptake infectious CWD prions. In 2018, these findings led the Norwegian government to ban hay and straw importation from CWD-positive regions. Meanwhile, concern is growing in the scientific community that CWD prions have the potential to infect humans, similar to the infectious cattle prions underlying Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) or "mad cow disease".

"The expansion of CWD across the United States and Canada over the past decade is shocking," said Dr. Peter Larsen, CEO, CSO, and co-founder of Priogen Corp. "Time is not on our side, the disease is likely circulating in regions that have yet to be identified due to existing diagnostic limitations. We must act with urgency to protect animal and human health, safeguard the environment, and preserve hunting traditions that have existed for thousands of years. This is Priogen's mission. We are bringing new services and tools to the market that will help stabilize impacted economies and fight the war against CWD."

Priogen's flagship services provide new CWD testing options for a variety of customers including the general public, cervid producers, academic researchers, and state, provincial, tribal, and federal agencies. The company's [PrioSense product family](#) consists of mail-in kits for rapid testing of tissues, which currently includes the world's first muscle testing service.

"The continued spread of CWD in cervids means that more hunters and their families will likely face the prospect of potential exposure to the causative prion agent. Mounting exposure to these CWD prions, which can exist in the form of unique strains, emphasizes a critical need for accessible and innovative diagnostic tools that can help mitigate possible risk." Dr. Michael Osterholm, director of the University of Minnesota's Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy.

Live animal testing, scheduled to launch in Q3 2023, is provided through a powerful multi-sample approach that is minimally invasive, repeatable, and highly accurate. The company also offers unique herd-level surveillance options through their proprietary PrioSwab sentinel technology, opening the door to real-time detection that will foster more proactive management solutions.

Priogen's portfolio includes several new portable diagnostic technologies that yield rapid results with exceptional diagnostic sensitivity and specificity. In 2021, the founding team became the first to detect CWD in a field setting using a proprietary gold-nanoparticle test named [MN-QuIC](#). "We've taken ultra-sensitive protein diagnostics into portable miniaturized platforms," says Larsen. "Our prototypes are providing accurate results within a few hours and we've identified clear pathways to deer-side CWD tests. Beyond CWD, our vision is to expand these next-generation protein assays to a variety of human neurodegenerative diseases."

"The University of Minnesota has the breadth and depth of expertise to form effective multidisciplinary teams like the one led by Dr. Larsen. Further, we have a strong entrepreneurial culture that has helped us launch 235 startup companies like Priogen since 2006," said Dr. Shashank Priya, vice president for research at the University of Minnesota. "We are #UMNProud of progress in prion diagnostics, which can inform and improve wildlife management strategies for diseases like Chronic Wasting Disease. Priogen is a great demonstration of how translational research can address complex problems impacting our daily lives and environment."

About Priogen Corp: Located in Minneapolis, MN, Priogen is a diagnostic company specializing in the ultra-sensitive detection of pathogenic proteins associated with prion and protein-misfolding diseases of wildlife, livestock, and humans. Those interested in our CWD testing services or technologies should get in touch with Priogen. To learn more about the company, visit <https://www.priogen.bio/>

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