



News & Trending

NEWS

SMITH ANDERSON ADVISES ON DEALS WITH MONSANTO, HARVARD FOR AGTECH COMPANY TO ADVANCE INNOVATION IN AGRICULTURE

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Smith Anderson's AgTech practice group recently served as lead legal counsel on two noteworthy deals for Pairwise Plants, an agricultural company working to develop new varieties of crops in an effort to address the biggest global challenges facing the future of food.

Pairwise Plants has partnered with Monsanto Company, a publicly traded U.S.-headquartered multinational agrochemical and agricultural biotechnology corporation, to advance agriculture research by leveraging gene editing technology. This strategic alliance is anticipated to bring long overdue solutions to help farmers produce healthier harvests and better conserve natural resources.

Under the parties' collaboration and licensing agreement, Monsanto will contribute \$100 million to access and develop Pairwise intellectual property in row crop applications. The deal also includes an option to commercialize any products resulting from the research collaboration.

The Smith Anderson AgTech team also advised Pairwise in its license of groundbreaking DNA base editing technology from Harvard University for use in agriculture. Base editing allows for precise and efficient changes directly to the sequence of DNA bases – As, Cs, Gs, and Ts – in a plant's genome. Under the license from Harvard, Pairwise will develop and commercialize DNA base editing applications for food and agriculture companies across specialty crops, fruits and vegetables.

David R. Liu, PhD, Professor of Chemistry and Chemical Biology at Harvard, developed the licensed technology platform of base editing methods, variations of CRISPR Cas9, and related enzymes. Pairwise has agreed to further develop the technology and use it to accelerate crop innovations needed to combat environmental and food security challenges.

Co-led by Partners John Therien, Michael Saber and Jason Brege, Smith Anderson's AgTech team has extensive experience advising agricultural technology companies in all phases of technology development and commercialization. The team has been active in helping to position North Carolina's thriving Research Triangle Park region as an internationally recognized center of AgTech innovation.

Read more about [Pairwise](#) and its agreements with [Monsanto](#) and [Harvard University](#).

PROFESSIONALS

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