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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 13, 2010

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IMMITICIDE SHORTAGE: INFORMATION FOR VETERINARIANS

LAKEWOOD, Colo. – In late 2009, Merial announced a shortage of its heartworm treatment (Immiticide) after the only U.S. supplier of the active ingredient, melarsomine dihydrochloride, stopped producing the compound. Although Merial has since identified an alternate supplier, it will take some time to ramp up production and gain regulatory approval through the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (ACVIM) has compiled the following information for veterinarians:

- Melarsomine dihydrochloride is an organic arsenical chemotherapeutic agent, and the only drug licensed to treat adult heartworms in dogs.
- Merial reported an impending shortage of melarsomine in December 2009 and depletion of inventory in early April 2010.
- Merial and the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine have identified an alternate supplier that produces melarsomine for European and international markets and are working with the manufacturer's management to gain FDA approval for the alternate facility. In the meantime, the FDA has approved production of a limited supply of melarsomine from the alternate supplier that will be available under the restricted distribution program.
- Merial began a restricted distribution program for the remaining inventory in 2009. Under the restricted distribution program, veterinarians can purchase Immiticide directly from Merial for dogs with heartworm disease and an immediate need to treat on a case-by-case basis. Immiticide can be obtained by calling Merial directly at 1-888-637-4251, [option 1](#). Immiticide is not available through distributors or to stock clinic inventory. Immiticide identified by lot number 1803823 and higher represent product being distributed through this program. Merial requests that veterinarians record the lot numbers for all product used under the restricted distribution program.
- Adverse events are being collected, evaluated and reported for all Merial products through a comprehensive Pharmacovigilance system. Adverse events can be reported to Merial by calling the Technical Solutions Department at 1-888-637-4251, [option 3](#).

The ACVIM is the national certifying organization for veterinary specialists in large and small animal internal medicine, cardiology, neurology, and oncology. Established in 1973, ACVIM's mission is to enhance animal and human health by advancing veterinary internal medicine through training, education, and discovery. To find an ACVIM Board-certified Specialist in your area, please visit www.ACVIM.org.

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