

Mexico, Argentina aim to roll out vaccine early next year

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Mexico and Argentina aim to have a coronavirus vaccine available for Latin America early next year under a production agreement with drugs giant AstraZeneca, the Mexican government said Thursday.

The vaccine, being developed in collaboration with the University of Oxford, is one of the most promising of dozens that researchers around the world are racing to prove safe and efficient.

The goal is to "start manufacturing to have the vaccine in the first quarter of next year," Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador told a news conference.

He said access to the vaccine would be "universal and free" in Mexico, which has registered nearly 55,000 coronavirus deaths—the third-highest toll in the world.

Production will be funded by the foundation of Mexican mogul Carlos Slim.

AstraZeneca's Mexico representative Silvia Varela said the active component would be made in Argentina and sent to Mexico where the vaccine will be completed for export around the region.

Brazil, which has recorded more than 100,000 coronavirus deaths, has a separate agreement with the British-Swedish pharmaceuticals company.

Mexico said it had asked Russia for more [clinical data](#) on its new coronavirus [vaccine](#), dubbed "Sputnik V," which Moscow hailed this week was the first to be approved offering "sustainable immunity."

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