



## News Release

**Genome**Prairie

### **Genome Prairie Projects attracts**

### **\$ 2.35 million in New Provincial Funding**

*\$1.85 M received for biofuels research; Flax project receives \$500,000*

Winnipeg, MB - October 5, 2009 - The future of flax and biofuels research has never been brighter in Manitoba. With the province of Manitoba's \$500,000 investment in Genome Prairie's Total Utilization of Flax Genomics (TUFGEN) and the \$1.85 M investment in the Microbial Genomics for Biofuels and Co-Products from Biorefining Processes (MGCB<sup>2</sup>), Manitoba is set to lead Canadian genomics research in flax and biofuels.

"Manitoba's contribution to these projects underlines its commitment to having our province emerge as a leader in alternative energy and agriculture research," said Jim Rondeau, Manitoba minister of Science Technology Energy and Mines (STEM). "The diversity of agriculture research development presently underway in Manitoba reflects the increasing complexity of the industry."

Funding for the research originates from the Manitoba Research Innovation Fund and the Winnipeg Partnership Agreement.

Most of the research for the MGCB<sup>2</sup> project is based in Winnipeg at the University of Manitoba. Drs. Richard Sparling and David Levin at the U of M are lead researchers for the project. Other researchers involved are Drs. Wilkins, Fristensky and Krokhn. The project also involves researchers in microbiology, biochemistry, genomics, bioinformatics,

proteomics, and engineering from across Canada, the United States, and New Zealand. The International Institute for Sustainable Development in Winnipeg is also a funding partner for the project.

“The University of Manitoba is pleased to lead these Genome Prairie projects,” said Dr. Digvir Jayas, Vice President (Research), University of Manitoba. “By using agricultural feedstocks as a source of alternative energy, we can reduce product waste and maximize uses for plants. The flax research project’s goal to develop flax as a dual-purpose crop and to sequence the flax genome, is an invaluable contribution to flax research.”

Dr. Sylvie Cloutier from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), and an adjunct professor at the U of M, co-leads the TUFGEN project which aims to increase the value of flax for producers. Manitoba based research for this project takes place at the Manitoba AAFC facility and involves Dr. Scott Duguid.

“Genomics research is becoming more and more important in the areas of energy and agriculture research. We are pleased to receive the Province’s support for these projects which have the potential to help transform the biofuels and flax industries,” commented Dr. Wilf Keller, President and CEO of Genome Prairie.

# # #

***Media Contacts:***

Carol Reynolds  
Genome Prairie  
Tel: (306) 668-3574  
Cell: (306) 241-9033  
Email: [creynolds@genomeprairie.ca](mailto:creynolds@genomeprairie.ca)

Joe Czech  
Communication Services Manitoba  
P: (204) 945-6778  
E-mail: [joe.czech@gov.mb.ca](mailto:joe.czech@gov.mb.ca)

Janine Harasymchuk  
University of Manitoba  
Phone: (204) 474-7300  
[Janine\\_Harasymchuk@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Janine_Harasymchuk@umanitoba.ca)