



MEDIA RELEASE

OAC Dean Announces CARES – A Centre for Agricultural Renewability and Sustainability

Ridgetown, October 17, 2008

Bioenergy research and the bioeconomy will be the focus of the University of Guelph's new Centre for Agricultural Renewable Energy and Sustainability (CARES) at the Ridgetown Campus.

Robert Gordon, dean of Guelph's Ontario Agricultural College, made the announcement at the official launch of the Centre today in Ridgetown.

"OAC is committed to innovative research and technology transfer that supports the development of new technologies that will enhance our environment," Gordon said.

"CARES fits perfectly with this mandate. It will bring together highly skilled people and support applied research and knowledge transfer in renewable energy, which is relevant to the public, private and non-profit sectors."

The Centre will have an agricultural focus, with the objectives of strengthening the agriculture sector, improving sustainability and development, increasing alternative energy and energy conservation, and leveraging education, training and research.

It will include a research and demonstration facility to test new technologies. "We want to do research that will benefit rural Ontario," said Art Schaafsma, Ridgetown Campus director. "The projects we undertake will create new value-added markets for agricultural products."

The first project is a farm-scale biodiesel demonstration plant that is currently under construction. In June, the federal government announced it's investing more than \$900,000 in the project. The funding is being provided through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food program, which is delivered in Ontario by the Agricultural Adaptation Council.

In addition to government and University support, the Southwestern Ontario Bio-Products Innovation Network (SOBIN) was instrumental in the conception of CARES. The innovation network creates new bioproducts, fosters energy conservation and expands alternative energy sources.

Today, the University and SOBIN signed a memorandum of understanding pledging to work together to promote bioproduct research and development opportunities. The goal is to substitute non-renewable materials in many manufacturing sectors, consumer goods and services. "We are very pleased to be working with the University of Guelph Ridgetown Campus on this important new initiative," said Matt McLean,

SOBIN's executive director. "This agreement will strengthen our relationship as we continue to work toward our shared objectives for long-term sustainable resource development."

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