

B.C. GRAIN INDUSTRY TO BENEFIT FROM \$1.5M INVESTMENT IN CROP ENHANCEMENT TRIALS AND BIOFUELS

DAWSON CREEK, British Columbia, December 1, 2007 – The Government of Canada is investing \$1.5 million to create new opportunities for B.C. farmers through a biofuel production study and an assessment to identify the best crop varieties for unique Peace Region growing conditions. This investment was announced today by the Honourable Jay Hill, Member of Parliament for Prince George-Peace River and Secretary of State and Chief Government Whip, on behalf of the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.

“Farmers know the importance of innovation and this Government is making sure they have the best crop varieties and can harness the potential of biofuel production here in the Peace River region,” said Secretary of State Hill. “The Peace Region is the largest producer of grains and oilseeds in B.C. and research like this is going to make sure farmers here continue to succeed and grow.”

The Government of Canada is investing \$1.2 million in the B.C. Peace River Cereal, Flax and Pulse Crop Enhancement project. This five-year project will use crop trials to determine what varieties are best suited for the unique growing environment of the Peace Region. Crops to be researched will include ethanol feedstock (for biofuel production), hard white spring wheat, shorter season flax, barley, and pea varieties. Funding for this initiative is provided through the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) program.

Through the Biofuels Opportunities for Producers Initiative (BOPI) the B.C. Grain Producers Association has received the maximum contribution of \$300,000 to develop a business plan to construct a biodiesel production facility. The plan will help local industry take the next step in creating a sustainable, environmentally-friendly, agriculture-based energy project in the Peace Region.

“These projects demonstrate how industry and government can work together to foster growth and innovation in the B.C. agri-food industry,” said Bert Miles, Chair of the Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C., which administers both the BOPI and ACAAf programs in British Columbia. “Encouraging innovation at the local level is essential to ensuring long-term viability of our industry.”

For more information on ACAAf and BOPI, please visit www.agr.gc.ca/acaaf and www.agr.gc.ca/bopi. To learn more about the Investment Agriculture Foundation and the funding programs it administers, please visit www.iafbc.com.

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