



News Release

For immediate release

Harper Government Helps Find Sweet New Uses for Sugar Beets

Lethbridge, Alberta, February 13, 2013 – Sugar beet growers are finding new and innovative uses for their crops thanks to support from the Harper Government. Member of Parliament LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat), on behalf of Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz, announced today an investment that will help demonstrate the viability of using beets in the production of sustainable alternatives to petrochemicals.

“Our government’s top priority remains jobs and economic growth, and the sugar beet industry plays an important role in driving our economy here in southern Alberta,” said MP Payne. “This project will help pioneer cutting-edge technologies that will enable our beet growers to diversify their customer base, increase their acreage, and ultimately boost their bottom lines.”

The investment of nearly \$600,000 will help the Alberta Sugar Beet Growers (ASBG) study the use of sugar beets and energy beets in the production of sustainable alternatives to petrochemicals. The funds will also be used to provide business advice concerning the creation of a value chain related to the commercialization of these alternatives. The products include bio-glycol, a renewable and sustainable alternative to traditional petrochemicals that can be used to produce a wide variety of goods including plastics, polyester fibre and resin; and bio-butanol, a promising biofuel that can be used in unmodified gasoline engines.

“This funding will allow us to bring leading-edge green technology and significant outside investment to Alberta,” said ASBG President Rob Boras. “Once this project is completed we expect to see that energy beets are a viable feedstock for the technology being tested, that they are commercially viable from a technical and an economic standpoint, and that moving to commercial production is achievable in Alberta.”

This investment is supported through the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP), a five-year, \$163-million initiative to help the Canadian agricultural sector adapt and remain competitive. The Agriculture and Food Council of Alberta delivers the regional component of CAAP in Alberta.

For more information about the [Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program](#), please visit the Program website, www.agr.gc.ca/caap.

Information about the [Agriculture and Food Council of Alberta](#) is available at www.agfoodcouncil.com.

To learn more about the [Alberta Sugar Beet Growers](#), please visit www.asbg.ca.



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