



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BC Agricultural Research and Development Corporation Announces Launch of the Renewable Agri-energy Initiative and Appointment of the Program Manager

ABBOTSFORD, BC – December 17, 2009 – The BC Agricultural Research and Development Corporation (“ARDCorp”) announced today the launch of the Renewable Agri-energy Initiative (“RAI”) and appointment of the Program Manager. This initiative, made possible by a \$100,000 investment from the BC Bioenergy Network, will support renewable agri-energy production throughout B.C.’s agricultural sector. The Program Manger will lead this initiative, providing a focal point as well as support and advice critical to the initiative’s success.

Renewable agri-energy production and use involve the adoption of technologies on farmland or the use of significant proportions of agricultural feedstocks, including crop by-products, livestock and food processing waste. Renewable agri-energy production will help improve B.C.’s agricultural sector’s economic viability, environmental sustainability, long-term self-sufficiency and contribute to the public good by helping to reduce waste disposal volumes, costs and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

To date, there have only been a few renewable agri-energy projects in B.C. This limited adoption results from multiple hurdles, including limited awareness, understanding and resources, unfavourable regulations and the lack of a clear renewable agri-energy champion. To help overcome these hurdles, a RAI has been created.

ARDCorp also announced that they have appointed Mathew Dickson as the RAI Program Manager. “We are pleased to appoint Mathew Dickson as Program Manager of the RAI. Mathew has considerable experience in renewable agri-energy project management and a strong interest in sustainable agriculture. We are excited that he is taking the lead and moving this important initiative forward,” said Dick Klein Geltink, Chair of ARDCorp.

“With the growing interest in alternate energy applications in BC, the launch of the Renewable Agri-energy Initiative (RAI) and the appointment of Matt Dickson is both timely and important.” said Michael Weedon, Executive Director of the BC Bioenergy Network. “Using agricultural waste to generate energy and value added products is smart business.”

Mathew Dickson has been working for the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture & Lands providing bioenergy and carbon offset policy advice since early 2006. While in this position, Mathew managed many renewable agri-energy and carbon offset projects, as well as organized international educational missions and events to promote awareness, understanding and acceptance of renewable agri-energy technologies in B.C. He has a BA from the Portsmouth University in the UK and a Masters in Resource Management from Simon Fraser University.

“Renewable agri-energy production and use presents a real opportunity for B.C.’s agricultural sector to generate value from a vast array of agricultural waste feedstocks,” stated Mathew Dickson. “Many of these technologies have been successfully adopted in Europe and parts of North America. Now it is time to facilitate their wide-spread adoption in B.C.”

ARDCorp is a wholly owned subsidiary of the BC Agriculture Council, which represents B.C. farmers. BCAC’s role is to help strengthen the competitiveness and long term viability of B.C.’s agricultural sector. For more information about the BCBN, visit <http://www.ardcorp.ca/>

The BC Bioenergy Network was established in April 2008 with a \$25 million grant from the B.C. government. This industry-led association acts as a catalyst for deploying near-term bioenergy technologies and organizing mission-driven research for the development and demonstration of new bioenergy technologies that are environmentally appropriate for the province of BC. For more information about the BCBN, visit www.bcbioenergy.ca

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