

**Ag-West Bio provides funding for MPT Mustard Products & Technologies Inc.**

**SASKATOON, SK:** Everyone knows mustard is great on hotdogs. Now a local company is finding more creative uses for the spicy little seed that grows so well in Saskatchewan. MPT Mustard Products & Technologies Inc. is developing biodegradable, environmentally-safe products from locally-grown mustard seed, including a high value biopesticide formulation. The company has just received a \$300,000 financing package from Ag-West Bio's Commercialization Fund.

Wilf Keller, President and CEO of Ag-West Bio, says the potential of the start-up company was obvious from the start.

"MPT had, and continues to have, a clear focus on commercialization. Impressive from day one was the company's capacity to demonstrate value to its potential commercialization partners - a key factor in their growing success."

MPT will add local value to Saskatchewan-grown mustard seed, provide a solution to a growing market and develop distribution partners across the continent. The product is targeted at select markets in North America, for managing key pests in high-value food crops like strawberries and tomatoes, and in the turf niche-market, with application primarily to golf courses. The product has been tested on a PGA course, with promising results.

"This combination of innovation, biotech solutions, and added-value is precisely what the AWB Commercialization Fund is designed for," says Brad Bly, Director of Commercialization at Ag-West.

Ag-West began working with MPT in 2009, assisting with business planning, feasibility assessment and capitalization input. Ag-West's funding commitment helped MPT garner a substantial funding approval from Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC) in June, 2010. Since then MPT has accelerated its capitalization plan using the services of MGI Securities.

Jay Robinson, co-founder and general manager for MPT, has advice for other entrepreneurs. "You need to develop a superior product and gain input from potential market partners. Then it's essential to show clearly on paper what your company is trying to do. It's also essential for a young company to build a team consisting of an experienced and well respected board and management."

Bly agrees, and says MPT has done just that, establishing an outstanding advisory board. "Company founders had strong expertise that was subsequently matched with advisory input from seasoned experts with track records in the target market." He says the start-up is gaining momentum, thanks to its persistence in advancing key research and commercial partnerships, and is well on its way to meeting the milestones identified in its business plan.

The potential benefits for Saskatchewan are substantial. MPT's technology provides biological-based solutions that are natural, renewable and safe to use in managing key pests; a new 'non-food' market will be created for Saskatchewan's mustard growers; and the local manufacture of MPT's patented formulations will mean job creation in Saskatoon and surrounding area.

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## **About Ag-West Bio**

Ag-West Bio is a membership-based organization that is a leading catalyst for industry growth through the provision of seed capital, regulatory support, industry information, and aiding strategic alliances. Our members represent agricultural biotechnology, bioproducts and bioprocesses, and natural health products and functional foods sectors.

AWB operates a Commercialization Fund, a financing vehicle designed to facilitate early-stage development in agricultural biotechnology companies. The financing takes the form of flexible and patient risk capital, and supports promising technologies at the early stages of development, often presenting too great a risk for traditional capital sources. Seed capital financing ranges from \$20,000 to \$300,000 and is targeted to initiatives where a clear pathway to commercialization can be demonstrated. [www.agwest.sk.ca](http://www.agwest.sk.ca)

**Mustard Products & Technologies Inc. (MPT)** offers a 'green' technology solution. The treatment of turf, vegetables and small fruit crops with synthetic pesticides to improve appearance and yield is common practice. However, the use of synthetic pesticides can have negative environmental impacts. MPT is developing 'green' alternatives – biological-based solutions that are natural, renewable and safe to use in managing key pests. They are developing and manufacturing innovative bio-pesticide formulations utilizing mustard. MPT's products are to be targeted initially as effective biological solutions for managing key pests in high-value turf niche market with application primarily to golf courses, as well as for high value food crops such as strawberries and tomatoes. By developing this sustainable biopesticide technology, MPT is creating a niche market for mustard beyond its traditional uses as a condiment or ingredient for the food industry, and providing an additional 'value-added' outlet for a Saskatchewan grown crop. [www.mptmustardproducts.com](http://www.mptmustardproducts.com)