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Alberta Innovates Bio Solutions offers funding to agriculture, agri-food, forestry, and bioproducts companies

EDMONTON... Taking an idea for innovation from concept to the marketplace often requires professional and technical services. To help pay for these services, applications for the next round of Alberta Innovation Vouchers are being accepted until April 2, 2012. An increased number of these non-repayable grants are now available to agricultural and agri-food producers and processors, foresters, innovators in municipal solid waste or bioproducts, researchers with small companies and others in Alberta's life sciences sector thanks to additional funding from Alberta Innovates Bio Solutions for the Alberta Innovation Voucher Program.

"We know Albertans have many creative ideas for new products and processes," said Stan Blade, Chief Executive Officer of Alberta Innovates Bio Solutions. "By offering extra vouchers we hope to draw out more bio-related ideas and help bring them to the marketplace."

For the April 2012 intake, Alberta Innovates Bio Solutions is collaborating with Alberta Innovates Technology Futures, who manage the program, and is providing up to \$300,000 in pilot funding to stimulate an increased number of vouchers for Alberta's life sciences industries.

Small Alberta-based companies may qualify for an Alberta Innovation Voucher of up to \$15,000 or up to \$50,000 to cover up to 75 per cent of eligible project costs. The \$15,000 voucher is typically used for services such as opportunity assessments, small scale prototyping or intellectual property services. The \$50,000 voucher is intended for more substantial technology development activities such as product prototyping, lab verification or field testing.

The voucher may be redeemed at the company's choice of service provider, which is a recent enhancement to the program. Service providers may include labs; fabrication centres; business development centres; specialists in marketing,

financing, or other advisory services; or other innovation support organizations. The voucher must be redeemed within one month of issue and the project must conclude within one year. **The deadline for applications for the next round of applications is 4:00 p.m. MST on Monday, April 2, 2012.** For further information or to download a form, visit www.bio.albertainnovates.ca/funding/voucher/.

Applications are also accepted from eligible Alberta-based companies developing technology-related processes, products, or services in any of Alberta's priority research areas of information and communication technology, life sciences (agriculture, forestry, biotechnology, etc), nanotechnology, energy, environment, or health.

Alberta Innovates Bio Solutions is a provincial government agency that leads and coordinates science and innovation to grow prosperity in Alberta's agriculture, food and forestry sectors. It is part of Alberta Innovates, Alberta's provincially funded research and innovation system and is a sister corporation to Alberta Innovates Technology Futures.

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