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\$5.5 m in federal funding boosts Performance Plants biofuels development project

March 6, 2009

Kingston, ON — Performance Plants Inc. (PPI), a global leader in agricultural and biofuel biotechnology development and Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC) are pleased to announce that a project led by PPI will be receiving up to \$5,565,063 in funding from SDTC.

The funds will be used to advance its trait technologies that improve conversion of cellulose into cost-effective biofuels and biochemicals. The announcement was made by Natural Resources Minister Lisa Raitt and Vicky Sharpe, SDTC President and Chief Executive Officer.

"The support of SDTC is important and greatly appreciated as it validates the efficacy of our technologies to more efficiently convert non-food biomass into cellulosic ethanol," says Peter Matthewman, President, Performance Plants. "We believe our technologies are the critical link to developing a profitable and sustainable clean energy sector that replaces such feedstocks as coal and petroleum with non-food biomass crops."

The challenge, says Mr. Matthewman, has been breaking down cellulose — tight chains of indigestible sugar molecules that make up the majority of plant cell walls — for conversion into renewable sources of energy. PPI has discovered a family of technologies called Enhanced Conversion Technology™ (ECT™) that alter plant cell walls to significantly improve their conversion into biofuels.

The primary use of the SDTC funding will be to develop ECT™ to improve the amount of releasable glucose and develop these traits in non-food crops to increase their conversion efficiency. The SDTC funding support will also be used to support the acceleration of Performance Plants' Biomass Enhancement™ (BET™) and Water Use Efficiency™ (WET™) technologies. These yield stabilization technologies will be combined (stacked) with ECT™ to further reduce costs by significantly increasing feedstock yield per hectare of land.

These traits are just some of the technologies developed by the company, which include Yield Protection Technology® (YPT®) and other traits that stabilize seed yields in drought and heat conditions and improve seed size.

"Current assessments for the North American biofuels market indicate that over 1 billion tons of dry biomass per year will be required to switch current petroleum consumption to 30% renewable fuels," says Mr. Matthewman. "Non-food purpose grown energy crops can provide the yield per hectare necessary to sustainably and cost-efficiently support a new clean energy industrial sector."

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PPI's next generation of non-food biofuel crops will also provide benefits to farmers by providing alternative crops such as switch grass, Miscanthus, sorghum and hemp that can be grown on marginal land with limited fertilizer and water requirements.

This next generation biofuel conversion technologies will be driven by PPI trait improvements have the potential to offer the necessary solutions for Canada to create a viable, profitable new clean energy industrial sector that use reliable, consistent, non-food feedstocks with superior processing characteristics, according to Mr. Matthewman. PPI is currently working with its partners to enable the value chain that will see these improvements brought to commercial reality.

About Performance Plants Inc. (PPI)

Performance Plants Inc., a spinoff company of Queen's University's PARTEQ Innovations, is a global leader in agricultural and biofuel technology development. The company's patented technologies weatherproof food and non-food biofuel crops through periods of drought and heat stress resulting in a more abundant, consistent and cost-effective harvests for farmers, and feedstock suppliers. The company has licensed its breakthrough Yield Protection Technology® to some of the world's leading seed companies such as Syngenta, Stine, RiceTec and Scotts Miracle Gro. Headquartered in Kingston, Ontario, the privately-held company has research and development facilities in Kingston, Saskatoon, and Waterloo, New York.

This Canadian based firm is actively growing non-food biofuel crops to replace coal at Lafarge Canada Inc.'s cement plant in Bath, ON. PPI and Lafarge have a multi-year agreement to develop and grow clean energy biomass.

About Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC)

Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC) is an arm's-length foundation which has received \$1.05 billion from the Government of Canada as part of its commitment to create a healthy environment and a high quality of life for all Canadians.

SDTC operates two funds aimed at the development and demonstration of innovative technological solutions. The \$550 million SD Tech Fund™ supports projects that address climate change, air quality, clean water and clean soil. The \$500 million NextGen Biofuels Fund™ supports the establishment of first-of-kind large demonstration-scale facilities for the production of next-generation renewable fuels.

SDTC operates as a not-for-profit corporation and has been working with the public and private sector including industry, academia, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the financial community and all levels of government to achieve this mandate.

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