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Plant Breeder's Rapeseed, Canola and Mustard Research Grows into International Research Pact

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University of Idaho

November 8, 2006

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MOSCOW, Idaho -- An international company Wednesday formally joined forces with University of Idaho plant breeder Jack Brown to develop high-value oilseed crops worldwide for alternative fuel production.

The deal will bring \$2 million in research funding during the next five years to Brown, who has developed mustard, canola and rapeseed varieties adapted to the Pacific Northwest and other U.S. regions.

Brown will develop new varieties tailored for world-wide adaptation with high oil yield for all climatic and environmental conditions.

Ian Rosenblatt, chief executive officer of Gibraltar-based Eco-Energy Ltd., visited the university's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences to view facilities and discuss future research with officials.

"The University of Idaho's long-term leadership in the development of new oilseed varieties and biodiesel use drew our attention to this lovely city of Moscow," Rosenblatt said.

Eco-Energy Ltd., a subsidiary of Interesorts Investments, was created to use Interesorts' extensive land holdings worldwide to produce biofuels and expand its warm relationships with governments to cultivate additional production, Rosenblatt said.

The company aims to become one of the leading suppliers in the global biodiesel market. The strategy, Rosenblatt said, calls for controlling the oil source through direct planting and seed-crushing management.

The company plans to contribute to the Third World's economic growth and welfare through oilseed production for biodiesel. Eco-Energy will strengthen its global leadership in land and crop research and development through its partnership with the University of Idaho, Rosenblatt said.

Eco-Energy has established offices in South America, Europe and China. Interesorts Investments Chairman Robert Noonan began to explore the biofuels business more than two years ago while searching for alternative uses for the company's 25,000-acre farm

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in Belize, Rosenblatt said.

The work done by the University of Idaho scientists demonstrates that if you grow a better liquid energy crop, the world will beat a path to your door. The oil produced from these crops will have specific characteristics suitable for making the highest quality biofuel.

In addition the crushed meal left over after the seed oil is extracted, can be used as a high protein livestock feed or even a soil pesticide, depending on the qualities Brown breeds into them, he said.

Pacific Gold, for example, is a spicy Oriental table mustard Brown's breeding program produced in 2002. Although seed from Pacific Gold is grown for the food market, it is also grown by potato producers as a biofumigant by plowing green plants into the soil to combat nematodes.

"We are perhaps unique in our approach to bioenergy. We are developing plants which are specifically designed to be liquid energy sources," Brown said.

"We are immensely proud of the accomplishments of our agricultural researchers. They are establishing the university as a global leader in renewable fuels," said University of Idaho President Tim White.

"We look forward to the new discoveries that this agreement will fuel," White said.

"Jack Brown's efforts to develop new varieties are visible across the Northwest each year as growers harvest thousands of acres of his rapeseed, canola and mustard varieties" said University of Idaho Agriculture Dean John Hammel.

Brown's work also aids growers who use the new varieties he developed in crop rotations to lessen pesticide and fertilizer applications, Hammel said.

A partnership between Brown and Jon Van Gerpen, Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department head at the University of Idaho, focuses on the direct use of new plant varieties and production of biodiesel.

Van Gerpen leads a \$1 million national biodiesel education program based at Idaho and Iowa State University.

The biodiesel program is built on research began in 1978 by Chuck Peterson, University of Idaho Engineering Dean emeritus and agricultural engineer. Peterson studied its use in engines and partnered with the U.S. National Park Service a decade ago to pioneer biodiesel use in Yellowstone National Park.

Some 50 national parks now use biodiesel in some of the nation's most cherished, pristine and challenging environments.

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About the University of Idaho

Founded in 1889, the University of Idaho is the state's flagship higher-education institution and its principal graduate education and research university, bringing insight and innovation to the state, the nation and the world. The only institution in the state earning the prestigious Carnegie Foundation ranking for high research activity, University of Idaho researchers attract more than \$100 million in research grants and contracts each year. UI's

student population includes first-generation college students and ethnically diverse scholars. Its high academic performers include 42 National Merit Scholars and a 2006-07 freshmen class with an average high school grade point average of 3.42. Offering more than 150 degree options in 10 colleges, UI combines the strengths of a large university with the intimacy of small learning communities. For information, visit www.uidaho.edu.

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