



For release September 8, 2010

## **ABIC 2010 Media Tip Sheet**

This year's Agricultural Biotechnology International Conference (ABIC) features 71 internationally renowned speakers addressing numerous topics under the conference themes of energy, human and animal health, and sustainability.

All speakers, including keynotes, will be available immediately after their session in the ABIC 2010 green room. ABIC staff and volunteers will also be on hand to help arrange interviews outside of these times.

Program highlights include:

**Fuel ethanol** is primarily produced from American corn and Brazilian sugarcane. Dr. Paul Oeller of Syngenta Biotechnology in North Carolina will share what promise advanced breeding and biotech offers to improve efficiency of these and future biofuel crops.

*Monday, September 13, 10:30 a.m.*

**Probiotics**, or using microorganisms to improve health, is a concept which is garnering public awareness and is even used in advertising campaigns for products such as yogourt. "You want me to put this bacteria where?" asks Dr. Thomas Tompkins of Montréal's Institut Rosell as he takes a broad look at developments and opportunities in the probiotic industry.

*Monday, September 13, 11:30 a.m.*

**Bioplastics** have the potential to replace a significant amount of petroleum-based products with a renewable, biodegradable alternative. Dr. Oliver Peoples from Metabolix in Cambridge, Massachusetts will explore bioplastics as a value-added co-product of industrial crops.

*Tuesday, September 14, 10:30 a.m.*

**Putting meat on the table** is getting more challenging due to competing demands for land, water, and energy, as well as emerging public concerns about animal health and welfare. Dr. Mitch Abrahamsen from Cobb-Vantress in Arizona will discuss how new technologies and knowledge from genetic science are changing the way we treat our food animals.

*Tuesday, September 14, 10:30 a.m.*

**Vaccines** have been credited with saving more lives than all other medical breakthroughs combined. Dr. Luis Barreto from Sanofi Pasteur's Ontario office will speak on Canada's important role over the last century in vaccine research, development, and commercialization, and share the latest progress of some promising new vaccines.

*Tuesday, September 14, 1:30 p.m.*

**Oilseeds can be used as substitutes for petroleum** in a wide range of products, from plastics to lubricants and industrial fluids. Jack Grushow, founder and CEO of Vancouver's Linnaeus Plant Sciences, will share how developing non-food, drought tolerant oilseeds can help reduce our carbon footprint without compromising food production.

*Tuesday, September 14, 2:30 p.m.*

**Our companion and food animals often make us sick** - even if they are healthy. Graeme McRae of Ontario's Bioniche Life Sciences will share news from the company's food safety division, which specializes in vaccines to make food animals more safe for human consumption. The first, a vaccine for cattle against *E. coli* O157, involved key contributions from Saskatoon's Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO).

*Tuesday, September 14, 4:00 p.m.*

**Pandemics such as influenza** can only be addressed by thoroughly understanding the interactions between animals and humans. Canada's Chief Public Health Officer Dr. David Butler-Jones will speak about emerging diseases and pandemics, and how agbiotech fits into the picture.

*Wednesday, September 15, 10:30 a.m.*

**Honeybees, our smallest "livestock"** are critical to humanity's food supply. Some estimates put bees' contribution at more than \$200 billion - nearly 10 per cent of the total value of the world's agricultural production. Albert Robertson, CEO of Saskatchewan's Meadow Ridge Farms, will speak about the threats facing the honeybee and implications for food production.

*Wednesday, September 15, 11:30 a.m.*

**Ethanol can be made from a wide range of crops**, despite our current focus on corn and sugarcane. David Blume of the International Institute for Ecological Agriculture in California will speak about the wide array of alternative crops that can be grown everywhere from deserts and marshes, or rotated with other crops on prime soil.

*Wednesday, September 15, 2:00 p.m.*

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[www.abic.ca/abic2010](http://www.abic.ca/abic2010)

Please note that cellphones do not function well inside TCU Place.