



## MEDIA RELEASE

*For Immediate Release*

### **Guelph-Waterloo Partnership Receives \$200,000 to Strengthen Life Science Clusters**

Guelph and Waterloo Region, July 15, 2003 ... The Guelph-Waterloo Partnership in Biotechnology (GWPB) is moving forward with an initiative that will help build and strengthen the life science activity in the region, thanks to financial support from the Ministry of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation's (MEOI) Biotechnology Cluster Innovation Program (BCIP). Today, Brenda Elliott, MPP for Guelph-Wellington announced support for the local applicants and presented the GWPB with a cheque for \$200,000.

"Ontario's continued investment through the M.a.R.S. L.A.N.D.I.N.G. and the Biotechnology Cluster Innovation Program has established Guelph and Waterloo region as centres of investment and innovation for the world in biotechnology and life sciences research" said Brenda Elliott, MPP for Guelph-Wellington.

Made up of the University of Guelph, University of Waterloo, the City of Guelph, Canada's Technology Triangle Inc, Communitech and the Guelph Partnership for Innovation, the GWPB will receive \$200,000 to help build the region's capacity for sustained cluster development and technology commercialization in the areas of life science, biotechnology and bio-products.

"I am pleased to see the regions of Waterloo and Guelph working together in partnership with the government of Ontario," said Deputy Premier and Minister of Education Elizabeth Witmer. "The commercialization of new discoveries in biotechnology will strengthen the local economy. It will also help Waterloo and Guelph create high-quality jobs, which will attract and retain qualified people to the region."

On June 20th, MEOI Minister Jim Flaherty announced the injection of money to provide funding of up to \$2.2 million to regional biotechnology consortiums across Ontario for strategic business plans designed to help support Ontario's continued prosperity.

Under the larger banners of biotechnology and life science, the GWPB has identified a leading role for the regions and the universities in the research and development of technologies related to bio-based products and processes. The value of this emerging bio-based marketplace is forecasted to reach \$150 billion US by the end of this decade.

The bio-based platform links the molecular biology and agricultural production strengths of the University of Guelph and the bio-informatics and bio-engineering strengths of the University of Waterloo with receptor capacity in two of Ontario's key industrial areas, to create a continual chain of innovation from invention to industrial adoption.

"This strategic investment from BCIP demonstrates the government's commitment to the emerging bio-based economy," says Alan Wildeman, vice-president (research) at the University of Guelph. "With this funding we will develop a strategy for maximizing the interface between our region's capacity in research and technology with the opportunities for bio-based industrial development "

In June 2002 the Government of Ontario launched a provincial Biotechnology Strategy which aims to create the critical mass needed to compete on a global scale and emphasizes the need for collaboration across the province. Paul Guild, vice-president (research) for the University of Waterloo notes that "collaborating with nearby University of Guelph

presents an excellent opportunity for two top notched institutions to excel in the global biotechnology marketplace and enables us to build our foothold in the bio-based economy.”

The City of Guelph is home to one of Canada’s primary life science clusters and research universities. Waterloo is home to one of Canada’s major computing, engineering and high-tech research universities. The Guelph-Waterloo region also contains a diverse manufacturing sector that not only uses new discoveries and innovation, but also plays a major role in identifying technological gaps. In addition, both regions are strategically linked to capacity -building programs and industries throughout Ontario and Canada.

Biotechnology, considered an enabling technology for the life science sector, is readily used in this region. Industries using biotechnology include medical imaging, vision systems, pharmaceutical manufacturing, environmental science, bio-informatics, and applications in the chemical and agricultural industries.

“There is a significant evolution beginning within industry. The Waterloo Region and Guelph are positioned to lead this evolution for Ontario and Canada. We are excited to build on synergies between our communities and foster the emergence of an Ontario bio-based industrial strategy,” says John Tennant, Chief Executive Officer for Canada’s Technology Triangle Inc.

Feasibility studies will help the GWPB to assess the region’s current strengths in biotechnology and life science and to create an action plan for meeting gaps identified in the process.

“Guelph is working hard to position itself as a leader in the bio-economy for Ontario and Canada, and we realize we can’t do this alone,” says Mayor Karen Farbridge. “With the convergence of life science comes the need for greater teamwork and partnerships. We’re pleased to partner with our colleagues in Canada’s Technology Triangle.”

Peter Cartwright, director of economic development, adds that Guelph sees the bio-based market “as a key building block for our local economy. This initiative builds directly on our departmental strategic goals to diversify our local economy, build partnerships and strengthen the life science cluster that is thriving in our region.”

The BCIP is part of the province’s Biotechnology Strategy, which has specifically targeted cluster development for the biotechnology sector and sets a goal of making Ontario one of the top three jurisdictions in North America for biotechnology.

.30.

**For more information, please contact:**

Erin Cheney, Economic Development Specialist, Life Science & Agri-Food Sectors  
City of Guelph  
519-837-5600 tel  
519-837-5636 fax  
echeney@city.guelph.on.ca

Linda Fegan, Manager, Marketing and Communications  
Canada’s Technology Triangle Inc.  
(519) 575-4041 tel, (866) 233-5133 toll free  
(519) 576-4333 fax  
lfctt@region.waterloo.on.ca