

■ **BIOFUEL:** \$10-million investment start of something big

Sarnia lands pilot plant

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A company that produces ethanol from renewable wastes has chosen Sarnia as the site for a new pilot plant.

Toronto-based Woodland Biofuels Inc. announced this week that a \$10-million "cellulosic ethanol" facility will be built at the new Bioindustrial Innovation Centre, located at Sarnia's UWO Research Park Campus.

"We're thrilled," said Joel Adams, director of the UWO Research & Development Park.

"It's going to be one of the largest projects on our site. We've been talking to them for some time and we really have the unique capabilities to be able to support their technologies."

The company received \$4 million in funding from the province's Innovation Demonstration Fund and plans to get started this fall.

Woodland Biofuels Inc. says its "breakthrough technology" eliminates the need for food crops like corn to make ethanol by converting any kind of biomass — wood waste, crop waste, etc. — into ethanol or other high value products.

The pilot plant will specifically test the ability to convert wood and agricultural waste into cellulosic ethanol, a renewable

resource.

The facility will be one of a number of tenants at the new \$20 million Bioindustrial Innovation Centre.

"This is proof that what we're doing is working, when we have this kind of interest," said Adams. "It's proof that Sarnia-Lambton is on the right track; industrial biotechnology is a major global opportunity for us. Hopefully this is the first of many more opportunities like this."

Construction of the plant is expected to begin this fall and could create up to 35 full-time and part-time jobs, said Adams.

If the technology proves successful, the company could potentially hire an additional 585 employees over the next five years.

"That's the whole point of a research park," said Sarnia Mayor Mike Bradley, who chairs both the Research Park board and the Biofuels Innovation Board. "This is what it's all about — creating jobs."

Bradley said the Research Park hopes to create 1,000 jobs by 2014.

"Sarnia-Lambton has developed this reputation as being an innovator, as a place to be for businesses," he added. "There's lots of very innovative, leading-edge things unfolding here that are going to lead to more jobs."

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