



Queensland Government online
7 September 2010

**Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional
Queensland
The Honourable Tim Mulherin**

Cairns AgInvest Forum focuses on bio-based future

CLEANER, greener, bio-based industries are fast emerging as one of the key investment pillars for agriculture in the future.

Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland Tim Mulherin said investors, researchers and producers will discuss the exciting opportunities of bio-based industries at AgInvest Forum 2010 in Cairns this week.

“Some consider bio-based industries to be the biggest opportunity for agriculture in more than 100 years,” the Minister said.

“The Bligh Government believes Queensland is well positioned to become the bio-based industrial hub of the Asia-Pacific region by 2020.

“Sweet sorghum and sugar cane, for example, can be fermented to produce renewable transport fuels for domestic purposes.

“Advanced technologies using fibrous and woody materials and plant oils are being developed for the production of sustainable aviation fuels, renewable diesel, bioplastics and industrial chemicals.

“The Bligh Government will introduce a 5 per cent ethanol mandate in Queensland on 31 December 2010.

“This will create close to 200 million litres of ethanol to be sold in the state and, in turn, lead to increased growth and investment in the ethanol industry.”

The Minister said the AgInvest Forum would present several case studies demonstrating the global potential of bio-based industries.

“There will be a series of stalls focusing on the investment opportunities offered by bio-based industries,” he said.

“Presenters will include Corelli Consulting, Clonal Solutions Pty Ltd, Evergreen Fuels, Trust Nature FNQ and Papyrus Australia.

“Principal of Corelli Consulting, Dianne Glenn, has direct and extensive experience

throughout the biotechnology industry value chain.

“Dr Glenn has consulted widely in diverse aspects of technology commercialisation, from hands-on scientific research, to investment and corporate activities for various biotech sectors, including agriculture.

“She recently completed a study into the prospects of developing a sugar-based bio-refinery precinct in regional Queensland and sees opportunities in particular for tropical north Queensland.”

Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) Agri-Industry Development Officer Peter Holden said there was a growing market for bio-based products.

“Bio-based products are industrial and consumer products, such as fuels, manufacturing material and chemicals, made from renewable materials using advanced technology,” he said.

Peter and Ann Radke’s Clonal Solutions Pty Ltd at Walkamin on the Atherton Tablelands is the only company in Australia with the facilities, technology and experience to commercially mass-produce elite clones for forestry, agriculture, horticulture and biofuels industry.

The company’s technical liaison officer Chris Walsh said the future of profitable agribusiness was in clonal plants.

“Cloning means high productivity with low variation,” Mr Walsh said.

“Clonal Solutions offer plants that help to reduce investment risk while improving gross margins of the businesses we work with.”

Other case studies include:

Evergreen Fuels, based in Mossman, is investing in Pongamia oil tree plantations in Far North Queensland for biodiesel production and is employing and training indigenous staff in formal horticultural practices.

Trust Nature Far North Queensland is setting up their new composting facility at Mareeba to convert municipal green waste to biologically active compost and plan to produce renewable bioenergy in the future.

Papyrus Australia, recent winner of the 2010 Australian Business Award for Innovation, operates a high-tech pilot plant at Walkamin to commercialise the conversion of banana plant trunks into environmentally-friendly fibre veneers, paper and board products.

The Aginvest Forum 2010 will run from September 8-10. An AgInvest tour of the Tablelands will occur on Friday 10 September and will include visits to Trust Nature FNQ, the Papyrus Australia plant and Clonal Solutions.

Other tour destinations include:

- Simms Group’s new \$10M state-of-the-art saw mill
- Award winning Jaques Australian Coffee plantation

- Mareeba Industrial Park - potential site for future bioprocessing investments
- Mareeba airport where Tablelands Regional Council will discuss its proposed aviation hub development
- SunWater's Mareeba-Dimbulah Water Supply Scheme infrastructure and \$21M engineering upgrade of Tinaroo Dam
- Mt Uncle Distillery - award winning agri-tourism venture.

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