

CANADIAN BIOMASS

PEI Ministers tour bioenergy projects

Jan. 12, 2010, Charlottetown, PEI – A recent ministerial tour of four privately operated biomass facilities will give the government valuable information on the potential and challenges of using farm and forest products as an energy source, says Prince Edward Island's Environment, Energy, and Forestry Minister Richard Brown. The January 7 fact-finding tour included Minister Brown, along with Innovation and Advanced Learning Minister Allan Campbell, Agriculture Minister George Webster, and employees of the respective departments. Staff from the Department of Transportation and Public Works also took part.

"This province is interested in seeing whether biomass – from agriculture or forestry – can be a valuable energy resource. But we are also interested in seeing whether this resource can be developed in an environmentally responsible manner," says Minister Brown. "By seeing facilities in operation, by looking at the emissions from biomass projects, and by looking at the sustainability of biomass fuel supplies, we can make informed decisions about how and if these kinds of projects should be pursued on Prince Edward Island."

The tour included stops at North Winds Inn and Suites, Artz Farm, Vanco Farms, and Royalty Hardwoods. The featured systems included both imported and Island-developed combustion systems that burn fuels such as grains, straw, wood shavings, and sawdust.

"It is important to find out what technology is available in the marketplace," says Allan Campbell, minister of innovation and advanced learning and the minister responsible for Innovation PEI. "Alternative energy is presenting new opportunities for the global manufacturing sector, and by participating in fact-finding tours in our own province, we will be in a better position to develop a strategy to compete and create new jobs."