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## **Biotechnology Applications Forecast to Fuel Canada's Economic Growth**

**OTTAWA – Dec. 7, 2011** – A new study prepared for Genomics Canada on the economic value of biotechnology forecasts a 9.4% average annual growth rate in the industry in the next 18 years, which translates into a total value of \$144 billion by 2030.

The study by the Centre for the Study of Living Standards (CSLS), an Ottawa-based non-profit economic research organization, and authored by CSLS economist Ricardo de Avillez, says the significance of biotechnology extends beyond the value of economic goods and services to cover job creation, enhanced human health, reduced environmental damage, and greater production capacity.

The report, released today, suggests Canada is well positioned over the next 20 years to support a maturing biotechnology industry that will fuel new applications in food production, alternate energy sources and other key areas.

The CSLS estimates that in 2005 the value added of biotechnology activities was \$15 billion, or 1.19% of the Gross Domestic Product (the value of all goods and services in the economy). CSLS figures were based on Statistics Canada's Biotech Use and Development Survey (BUDS). The last survey in 2005 found 532 innovative biotech firms in Canada, with revenues of \$4.2 billion and 13,450 employees.

Growth in biotechnology activities stem from increased innovation in biological and particularly genomics science with applications in three areas: agriculture and related activities; medicine and health care; and industry, environment and energy.

Between 1999 and 2005, the survey showed biotechnology revenues grew 13.7 per cent per year. "This rapid growth likely continued from 2005 to 2011 and is expected to persist in the future given the economic opportunities that advances in biotechnology research are opening up," said CSLS Executive Director Andrew Sharpe.

"We are seeing how the genome sciences have emerged to become a driving force on the economic landscape," said Pierre Meulien, President of Genome Canada, which commissioned the study. "We expect biotechnology to help provide the means of economic growth and the ability to help Canada adapt to the challenges of a complex, troubled world."

Much of Canada's biotechnology is centred on medicine and health care, in the form of biopharmaceuticals, diagnostics, and new treatments including personalized medicine tailored to meet individual needs, says the report.

In the coming decades, the biotechnology industry profile will continue to mature if the current trend remains, the report says. Canadian biotechnology is fueling new applications in food production, creating crops that are more resistant to pests, require fewer herbicides, and can withstand climate change and ensure adequate nutrition for the world's fast-rising population.

Biotechnology will also provide more advanced forms of energy in a world where rising incomes in developing countries are increasing demand for resources and putting increased pressure on Canada's – and the planet's – environment.

Canada has a unique abundance of natural resources. Applying Canadian expertise in life sciences to managing and cultivating these resources will add new value to our economy.

#### About The Centre for the Study of Living Standards

The Centre for the Study of Living Standards is a non-profit, national, independent organization that seeks to contribute to a better understanding of trends in and determinants of productivity, living standards and economic and social well-being through research. For more information, see [www.csls.ca](http://www.csls.ca)

#### About Genome Canada

Genome Canada is a non-profit corporation employing an innovative business model based on funding and managing large-scale, multidisciplinary, internationally peer-reviewed genomics research projects in areas such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, the environment and human health. For more information, visit [www.genomecanada.ca](http://www.genomecanada.ca)

A copy of the report *Measuring the Contribution of Biotechnology to the Canadian Economy* can be found on the CSLS web site at [www.csls.ca/reports/csls2011-18.pdf](http://www.csls.ca/reports/csls2011-18.pdf)

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