



Genome Prairie BRIEF

Presented to:

**House of Commons Standing
Committee Finance (FINA)**

Presented by:

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GenomePrairie

Genome Prairie Overview

Genome Prairie is one of six regional genome centres established by Genome Canada. Its corporate office in Saskatoon and its satellite office in Winnipeg manage and support large-scale genomics and proteomics projects in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Since 2000, Genome Prairie has managed and supported over \$197 million in research activity within key industry sectors including agriculture, health, mining and energy in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Each Genome Prairie project involves an assessment of the societal impacts of this emerging bioscience research.

Through network establishment and regional priority consultations, Genome Prairie partners with government, universities and industry as well as Genome Canada, a not-for-profit organization. Genome Prairie assists with shaping and implementing regional and national strategies and policies in genomics and related bioscience research to benefit all Canadians and our global society.

Genome Prairie's Roles

Genome Prairie has three key roles involving genomics and bioscience research:

- 1) Manage research projects and facilitate regional participation and co-funding for Genome Canada and other genomics research project investments in the Prairie Region.
- 2) Provide regional leadership and support for genomic and bioscience research and knowledge transfer for the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan.
- 3) Promote education and awareness of recent advancements and societal impacts of genomics and bioscience research to government, industry, public and other stakeholders.

In its role as facilitator, Genome Prairie draws together industry, government ministries and agencies, universities, research organizations and the public in support of research projects of strategic importance to the Canadian public and to the global community. Regionally, Genome Prairie works in partnership with organizations including:

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)
- Ag-West Bio Inc.
- CancerCare Manitoba
- Genome Canada and genome centres across Canada
- International Institute for Sustainable Development
- Life Sciences Association of Manitoba
- Manitoba Science Technology Energy and Mines (STEM)

- National Research Council Canada – Plant Biotechnology Institute (NRC-PBI)
- St. Boniface General Hospital
- Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture
- University of Manitoba
- University of Saskatchewan
- University of Regina
- Vaccine Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO)
- Western Economic Diversification

Key Observations

1. **The Knowledge Advantage.**

Genome Prairie continues to work with key public institutions and industry to leverage funding and share knowledge and promote efficient research projects. Organizations such as the Universities of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the Vaccine Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO), National Research Council – Plant Biotechnology Institute (NRC-PBI), CancerCare Manitoba, Agriculture and Agri-Food's Research Centre, Canadian Light Source Synchrotron (CLS) and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) represent our strong regional research infrastructure and a powerful and highly regarded team of scientists.

2. **The Entrepreneurial Advantage.**

By fostering research networks and commercialization partnerships, Genome Prairie and its regional partners encourage the translation of knowledge into commercial applications. Moving ideas from the bench to the marketplace and creating an economic impact is one of our main objectives in helping Canada to gain a competitive global entrepreneurial advantage.

3. **The People Advantage.**

Genomics tools and discoveries can be applied to address world issues such as the global food and energy shortages, climate change challenges and environmental sustainability. Genome Prairie is in a unique and objective position to network with researchers, government and industry to facilitate genomics and proteomics solutions and to encourage the innovation process. An integral role of Genome Prairie is to educate and provide information to the public and stakeholders about the important impacts of genomics research to society.

Recommendations

1. **Increase focus on third-party organizations to facilitate research and development programs to increase efficiency and effectiveness of program delivery.** We recommend that third-party, arm's length organizations be considered as vehicles of delivery for future programs or programs currently being delivered by governmental organizations. This will enhance the roles of existing non-governmental organizations and have a positive economic impact.
2. **Establish a national strategy for agri-food research and development in the Federal Science and Technology Strategy.** The current S& T Strategy does not include the agri-food sector as a priority area. The impact of this sector on the

global economy and food supply is significant. We recommend that this sector be prominently featured in the upcoming S& T Strategy for Canada.

- 3. Review and streamline the regulatory process for new ag bioscience businesses products and processes.** This will have a direct impact on the economy and a more business-friendly environment will foster entrepreneurial growth.

For additional information, please contact:

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