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INNOVATION AGENDA.'

> FP INNOVATIONS

BY ALAN DORICH

If there is an image that embodies the environment, it might be our green forests, with their tall, mighty trees. FPInnovations strives to sustain those environments, as its members derive products from them.

Based in Pointe-Claire, Quebec, with research laboratories in Quebec City, Montreal and Vancouver, and technology transfer offices throughout the country, FPInnovations is a recognized innovation center and Canada's leading forest products research institute. The organization's specialties include technical services and technology transfers in multiple areas, such as wood harvesting, pulp and paper, nanotechnology, bio-energy generation and chemical production.

President and CEO Pierre Lapointe says FPInnovations was formed three years ago from the federal government's Canadian Wood Fibre Center of the Canadian Forest Services and three forest institutes: Forintek, Feriic and Papri-can. "The reason for that was to create one integrated research institute that would look at the complete forest sector innovation chain," he says.

Today, FPInnovations employs a staff

INNOVATION



"We're already linked to most Canadian universities to secure our pipeline of new technologies." -Pierre Lapointe, President and CEO



of 550 and is "the hub of the forest innovation agenda," Lapointe says. For example, he says, if the institute were to review the operations of a pulp and paper mill, it could go beyond finding ways to reduce production costs.

FPInnovations has the ability to help mills make new products from pulp. "Being able to do tech transfer in real time is a key component of the innovation process and it offers the greatest impact," he says.

Getting the Best

A geologist by trade, Lapointe joined FPInnovations in 2008. Previously, he worked in research management organizations where he performed research for governments and universities.

Lapointe describes himself a person that possesses natural leadership abilities. "I have a strong vision for FPInnovations," he says, adding that he has a "passion" for R&D.

Additionally, Lapointe says he has cultivated the ability to receive information from researchers and translate it into business successes. "People want to offer their best, you just have to give them the means to express themselves," he says.

Beyond Tradition

Lapointe says he is extremely proud of the partnership FPInnovations now has

PROFILE

FPInnovations

www.fpinnovations.ca

2010 budget: \$95 million

Headquarters: Pointe-Claire, Quebec

Specialty: Forest products research

Employees: 550

with Domtar Corp., a marketer and manufacturer of uncoated free sheet paper, paper grade, fluff and specialty pulp. This July, both organizations formed a joint-venture company to build a nanocrystalline cellulose demonstration plant in Windsor, Quebec.

"WE MANAGED TO END OUR FINANCIAL YEAR WITH A \$1 MILLION PROFIT. THIS WILL HELP US IN OUR EFFORTS TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD!"

The plant, which is the first of its kind in the world, will produce a ton of nanocrystalline cellulose daily, Lapointe says. The nanomaterial is made from cellulose fibers in the wood pulp manufacturing process and has applications within multiple areas, including optically reflective films, durable varnishes and bio-plastics.

Domtar President and CEO John D. Williams noted in a statement that his company was pleased to work with FPInnovations. "The remarkable properties of nanocrystalline cellulose and wide range of potential applications speak volumes about the commercial potential of new fiber-based products that go beyond traditional pulp and paper applications," he said.

The Right Way

FPInnovations is now currently facing a reduction in its membership, Lapointe

says. When the organization was originally financed, it was based on its membership component, which was calculated from the number of pulp and paper producers, forest operations and wood products companies that were located in Canada.

"We went from a membership of \$42 million to about \$9 million in about 14 months," Lapointe says, noting that FPInnovations today has a budget of \$95 million. "When you're losing 70 percent of your budget, you have to be very creative in reorganizing."

These efforts included finding new sources of financing, new members and new clients for FPInnovations. With these, "We managed to end our financial year with a \$1 million profit," Lapointe says. "This will help us in our efforts to keep moving forward and attract new customers in new markets."

Looking ahead, Lapointe wants FPInnovations to continue in its position as a center of innovation for the forestry sector in Canada. "We're already linked to most Canadian universities to secure our pipeline of new technologies," Lapointe continues. "Among other goals, we are working towards becoming an international R&D organization in the short term.

"Here are a few examples: monitoring of forest road development and operations in New Zealand, and collaborating in a Canada-China joint-research team," he says. "This partnership is working on ways to better utilize the forest resources, increase the sustainability and profitability of the forest industry, and create a more environmentally-sound pulp product that can be marketed around the world." •mt