



Media Release

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Making cheaper and more efficient biofuels

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) today announced \$4.03 million in funding for Australian yeast developer Microbiogen to make production of bioethanol from plant waste cheaper and more efficient.

The project, totalling \$8.06 million, will aim to optimise biocatalysts targeted to more efficiently convert sugars to bioethanol for commercial production.

On behalf of the Australian Government, ARENA's recoupable grant will support Sydney-based Microbiogen to adapt and selectively breed a yeast strain capable of optimising second generation bioethanol production where waste biomass is utilised instead of food.

Microbiogen will be working in partnership with a global industrial biotechnology market leader who has provided the base strain and take the end product to the market globally.

Microbiogen's project is expected to speed up the process of fermentation as well as lower residual sugars, reduce production of unwanted by-products and allow higher solid loadings.

ARENA CEO Ivor Frischknecht said the project could progress bioethanol in Australia and would have significant commercial value to bioethanol production facilities worldwide.

"We hope this will provide valuable knowledge for existing Australian bioethanol projects and facilities. It could potentially help in increasing the supply of bioethanol in Australia.

"This project could improve the commercial viability of advanced biofuels and hopefully open up export opportunities in North America and Asia," Mr Frischknecht said.

Microbiogen CEO Geoff Bell said: "This funding will help Microbiogen realise its goal of developing an exceptionally robust yeast catalyst that enables the cost-effective production of biofuels from non-food waste along with high value feed by-product.

"We believe that this technology is critical to the sustainability of biofuels since it will address both the economic and sustainability issues surrounding biofuels today," he said.

ARENA media contacts:

0410 724 227

media@arena.gov.au

**For more
information**
arena.gov.au