

# Seaplants growth spurt

## Biosciences firm to double capacity at processing plant in Cornwallis

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Valley Bureau

A Nova Scotia bioscience company is bucking the downward trend in the economy and expanding to meet market demand.

**Acadian Seaplants Ltd.** said Monday it will double the capacity at its Cornwallis, Annapolis County, processing plant, thanks to financial help from the province.

"Throughout the years, Acadian Seaplants has invested heavily in research and development, along with market development," company president Jean-Paul Deveau said in an interview.

"And those have been the cornerstones of the development of the organization. By doing that, we've been able to differentiate

around the world.

"That way, we've been able to build our business by differentiating ourselves substantially from our competitors."

The Dartmouth company has several processing plants in Atlantic Canada. It employs 300 people in eight countries, including 75 at the Cornwallis facility.

Premier Rodney MacDonald was at the Cornwallis plant Monday, where he said the province, through Nova Scotia Business Inc., will help the firm by offering a payroll rebate of up to \$270,000 over five years.

The rebate will help Acadian Seaplants maintain its workforce of 75 full-time employees as it improves its competitiveness.

"This family-owned company is one of a growing number that keep jobs in our communities

rural Nova Scotia," Mr. MacDonald said in a news release. "The province and NSBI are committed to partnering with companies like Acadian Seaplants to make smart investments in our future."

"What we're doing here is doubling the capacity of our manufacturing facility at Cornwallis," Mr. Deveau said.

Most of the money will be used to purchase manufacturing machinery and equipment and expanding the size of the building, he said. Some will also be used for market development.

"Acadian Seaplants offers world-class products that are environmentally friendly," Mr. Deveau said in the release.

"This niche remains in high demand, even with the economic uncertainty in today's marketplace. We need to keep our customers supplied and satisfied."

Expansion of the facility is expected to help increase productivity and capacity to develop

The company specializes in the technology-based manufacturing of natural and specialty fertilizers, feed, food, food ingredients and brewery supplies derived from select species of marine plants.

It exports its products to 70 countries.

Current economic conditions, including rising transportation costs and the decreased value of the Canadian dollar, are leading many exporters to find new ways to improve productivity and reduce costs, the release said.

Acadian Seaplants is the world's largest independent manufacturer of seaweed-derived specialty products.

The 40-year-old company has been recognized for developments in technology, environmental practices, management and exports.

It has also been named one of Canada's 50 best-managed companies.