



Jennifer M. Granholm, Governor  
David C. Hollister, Director

## *News Release*

Contact: Maura Campbell  
517.373.9280  
[www.michigan.gov/dleg](http://www.michigan.gov/dleg)  
Email: [mediainfo@michigan.gov](mailto:mediainfo@michigan.gov)

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Contact: Michael Shore, MEDC  
(517) 335-4590

# **Governor Praises Joint Venture Between French and Michigan Companies**

## *ARD to Join DNP in Innovative Agricultural Production Venture*

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm today hailed French company Agro Industrie Recherches et Développements' (ARD) decision to form a joint venture with Diversified National Products (DNP), a Scottville, Michigan company that is diversifying the state's agriculture industry through innovative, patented technology. The venture was also announced this morning by French President Jacques Chirac in at Pomacle, France, home of ARD.

"It is not often that the president of a European nation announces a collaborative effort with a Michigan company," Granholm said. "It is great to see DNP prosper here in Michigan as it gains international attention."

The joint venture announced today is focused on the production of succinic acid from "green" sources. Succinic acid has enormous global demand for everything from industrial solvents and biodegradable polymers to airport runway de-icers.

"We're using the same type of science that's created medicine to solve one portion of the nation's energy problem—that 20 percent of imported oil goes into the petrochemical business," DNP CEO and chairman Paul Jacobson said. "This is an exciting new industry for Michigan and while it's a new industry, it takes advantage of Michigan's strengths."

DNP's growth in Michigan has been assisted by a Single Business Tax credit the Governor announced in April 2004 under the state's brownfield redevelopment program. At that time DNP committed to invest more than \$9.1 million to redevelop a vacant, contaminated site in the city of Scottville to accommodate a morel mushroom production facility. The state tax credit,

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approved by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and valued at approximately \$750,000, supported preparation of the 51.6-acre site located at 506 State Street. The company has created 50 new Michigan jobs as a result.

Fifteen of DNP's patents have sprung from the research of Kris Berglund, a Michigan State University Distinguished Professor and DNP's chief science officer.

"We are using non-genetically modified, natural microbes to make useful products—that's the common thread of this company," Berglund said. "The products we're developing are exciting, they come at the right time on the market and the interest we're receiving from literally all over the world is tremendous."

DNP's technology to make succinic acid is notable because of its organic sources. Succinic acid is made from natural sugars, such as Michigan corn or French wheat. It serves as a starting point for chemicals that can:

- lower the freezing point of water and thus can be used to make safer engine coolants and jet runway de-icers;
- find uses in biodegradable industrial solvents that pose little threat of air pollution or ozone damage; and
- make biodegradable polymers for car parts such as dashboards.

DNP is a privately held company which includes investment from Toyota Tsusho Corporation, Japan Asia Investment Corporation and TTC-RMA Venture Partners LLC (TRVP.) TRVP is a technology investment and incubation company jointly owned by Toyota Tsusho Corporation of Nagoya, Japan, and Roberts Mitani Advisors, LLC of New York.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation, a partnership between the state and local communities, promotes smart economic growth by developing strategies and providing services to create and retain good jobs and a high quality of life. For more information on MEDC initiatives and programs, visit the Web site at [www.michigan.org](http://www.michigan.org).

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