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Funding Announced for Northern Seafoods Ltd.

The traditional cardboard cartons used to freeze product at fish processing facilities may become a thing of the past if the development and testing of a new product proves successful. Through the Solid Waste Management Innovation Program administered by the Multi-Material Stewardship Board (MMSB), Northern Seafoods Ltd. has received \$8,000 to investigate the use of reusable freezer trays to replace corrugated inner cardboard cartons.

“More and more, we are seeing businesses in our communities, like Northern Seafoods, showcasing their environmental stewardship and developing innovative processes to reduce their footprint,” said the Honourable Charlene Johnson, Minister of Environment and Conservation. “Key components of the waste management strategy include increasing waste reduction, developing modern standards and technology, as well as maximizing economic opportunities associated with waste management in the province. This project is a wonderful example of these components in action.”

Under the current process utilized by Northern Seafoods Ltd., product is placed in cardboard cartons for freezing, prior to placement in master cartons for final transport. The new process will involve the replacement of the inner cardboard cartons with plastic inners (trays) which, in turn, will be placed on freezer racks and frozen in air blast freezers. Once frozen, the product will be removed from the pans and placed inside master cartons, eliminating the need for inner cardboard cartons. This will potentially reduce 60 per cent of the total volume of packaging used.

“Through the Solid Waste Management Innovation Fund, we support local organizations and individuals to help them explore the potential of their business concept relating to waste management and reduction,” said Leigh Puddester, Chief Executive Officer of the MMSB. “The project proposed by Northern Seafoods Limited certainly demonstrates the intent of the fund, and we look forward to seeing the results of this research and development opportunity.”

“Northern Seafoods appreciates this investment by the MMSB,” said Derek Green, President of Northern Seafoods Ltd. “We are very eager to get started and develop the prototype tray. We are confident that testing will prove successful and will not only significantly reduce the amount of packaging we use and reduce our environmental impact, but it will also save us time and money.”

The MMSB launched the new Solid Waste Management Innovation Program in October 2009. The program was created to encourage and support research and development of a new or improved technology, product, service or process that supports the ongoing implementation of the Provincial Solid Waste Management Strategy. The annual budget for the Innovation Fund is \$100,000 with eligible projects receiving a maximum of \$10,000. The program is available to provincially-owned and/or operated businesses, industry associations, post-secondary institutions and non-profit organizations.

For more information on the Solid Waste Management Innovation Program, please visit www.mmsb.nl.ca or contact MMSB at 709-753-0948.

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