



**Source:**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**AGRO<sub>2</sub> PIONEERS ETHANOL FROM CASSAVA IN PANAMA**

Panamanian Company Receives Funding from Dutch Government to Research and Develop Ethanol Plant

SANTIAGO, PANAMA –[Agro<sub>2</sub>](#) announces it will be the first company to research and produce ethanol from cassava in Panama, thanks to funding from FACT Foundation and the Global Sustainable Biomass Fund of NL Agency, a division of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

“We are very excited about this project and are eager to stimulate cassava as a sustainable biomass source” said Maartje op de Coul, Global Sustainable Biomass Fund Coordinator.

Dutchman Frans van Hulle, Agro<sub>2</sub>'s founder, has been growing cassava for three years, and is constructing a demonstration ethanol plant in Veraguas and will begin testing this year.

Agro<sub>2</sub> is exploring cassava's feasibility as a sustainable ethanol feedstock for the Panamanian market. The project aims to provide income for local farmers who produce cassava. Agro<sub>2</sub> has been collaborating with local farmers, businesses and NGOs to research and analyze local and foreign cassava varieties.

The company, which is a member of [CLAYUCA](#)—the Latin American and Caribbean Consortium to Support Cassava Research and Development and part of CIAT— is organizing a farmer's association to organize farmers for the roll out of the planned 1,000 ha. in the next 3 years.

Van Hulle says his goal is to become a sustainably certified supplier of ethanol for local markets. “In Panama, all of the fuel we use is imported, but what I would like to see is cars in Panama City powered by locally grown, sustainable cassava.”

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For more information, visit [www.agro2.com](http://www.agro2.com), or contact Melissa Cessna at [m.cessna@agro2.com](mailto:m.cessna@agro2.com), (507) 394-9100, skype: Melissa.cessna1

*Agro<sub>2</sub> is a private Panamanian company founded in 2007 and is passionate about growing and processing cassava for export as well as for the local market and plans to start producing ethanol from cassava in Q4 2010. Agro<sub>2</sub> uses sustainable agriculture practices and works to promote positive socio-economic impacts in the Veraguas province of Panama.*