

# Bioscience on P.E.I. employs over 1,300 people, generates \$200 million

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*Dr. Russ Kerr, right, CEO of Nautilus Biosciences and chairman of the Prince Edward Island BioAlliance board, shows samples to Rory Francis, executive director of the P.E.I. BioAlliance.*

## [P.E.I. BioAlliance Inc. celebrating 10th anniversary attracting small companies with smart ideas](#)

Bioscience entrepreneur and pioneer Regis Duffy is bullish about the future in P.E.I.

Recognizing added value in the diagnostic and biochemical marketplace early on, he believed P.E.I. could attract small companies with “smart ideas”, which would benefit from seed capital and, later, attract bigger players.

“We can’t predict the future, but we can create it,” said Duffy, board chairman when P.E.I. BioAlliance Inc. was launched in 2005 to facilitate the bioscience cluster’s

growth. “The question then was how a small, relatively remote jurisdiction like P.E.I. could excel in the fiercely global competition for bioscience intellectual property, brainpower and capital.”

The answer is apparent 10 years later, as the cluster has substantially increased the number of P.E.I.-based bioscience companies, export sales, and jobs: 42 companies employing over 1,300 people and expecting to generate \$200 million in annual sales this year.

In 2005, the BioAlliance chose a strategic focus on technologies and products related to bioactive compounds and their application to human, animal and fish health and nutrition.

“It was a crucial decision,” says Dr. Russ Kerr, current chairman of the BioAlliance board. “Concentrating on one area, we can compete with anyone in the world.” Exports include natural health products, cosmetic ingredients, nutraceuticals, vaccines, animal- and fish-health products, diagnostics, and pharmaceutical ingredients.

Other success factors are evident as the BioAlliance celebrates its 10-year anniversary with BIOTECCanada launching National BioTechnology Week from Charlottetown.

Turning size to competitive advantage, the Cluster’s shared economic vision and collaboration have shaped industry-research partnerships, investment and market-driven business development and attracted worldclass technologies and expertise. Steady support from successive federal and provincial governments has ensured funding for research and development infrastructure, early-stage seed capital and labour/skills development.

In 2008, the province identified the bioscience industry as one-of-four key economic sectors, and the UPEI building housing the National Research Council – an important incubator for researchers and privatesector industrial partners – was named the Regis and Joan Duffy Research Centre. The cluster’s research base stimulated economic opportunities and spinoffs, and five Canada research chairs were awarded to UPEI. Holland College developed the Bioscience Technology program and created Canada’s Smartest Kitchen, the research and development arm of the Culinary Institute of Canada. A 65-acre BioCommons Park, already home to several companies, was established in West Royalty.

The 2014 announcement that the federal Venture Capital Expert Panel had chosen the BioAlliance as one of Canada's top business accelerators and incubators indicated the sector's remarkable development in just ten years.

"It speaks volumes about how P.E.I.'s Bioscience Cluster is recognized throughout Canada and competes on the national stage," says Kerr. "The whole province can be proud of the future opportunities it's creating."

The BioAlliance is formulating a multi-year strategy for Cluster growth that could create 2,000 jobs and \$400 million in annual revenues by 2020 with the right private/public investment.

"Ten years ago, no one would have predicted we'd quadruple in size," says Kerr. "The next 10 years will be very exciting."