



Harvard gets wood

ONE of the world's most exclusive universities has invested an estimated \$40 million in a Northern Territory station that grows sandalwood, used in fragrances and the treatment of acne.

Harvard University, in the US state of Massachusetts has taken a stake in a 399ha plantation operated by Tropical Forestry Services (TFS) in the Douglas-Daly region, about 150km south of Darwin.

TFS confirmed the investment when it transferred part of its water licence to an Australian company owned by Harvard. TFS will use a new planting method involving two million tree-guards and four million bamboo sticks in this year's NT program, according to the ABC.

A team of about 70 people reportedly started digging and planting seedlings by hand in cardboard biodegradable tree-guards, held in place by two bamboo sticks, last July.

The investment comes as major pharmaceutical companies turn to sandalwood oil as a treatment for acne.

TFS, which manages the largest Indian sandalwood plantations in the world, said its Indian sandalwood oil was an important part of clinical trials to develop a prescription drug to treat the skin.

The oil is also said to have anti-inflammatory properties. TFS sold its sandalwood oil to Nestle-owned company Galderma for half a billion dollars, which saw the commodity price leap to \$US4500 per kilogram last year.

The company's head of global products Mario Di Lallo said at the time Galderma would be using the oil in various products.

"Things like eczema creams, warts, acne, actinic keratosis, which are the precancerous skin lesions that people go and get cut off and burnt off ... most things that afflict the skin," Mr Di Lallo said.

Source: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/harvard-gets-wood/story-fnk1w5y0-1227355365177>

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