

Vision vows To Replace Petroleum With Plants



CORN TALK NEWS

PENNSYLVANIA MASTER CORN GROWERS ASSOC., INC.

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — A broad-based coalition of U.S. agricultural, forestry, and chemical industry leaders met in St. Louis to advance an industry-wide vision for creating plant-based, renewable products that would replace current petroleum-based products as fossil-fuel supplies dwindle.

The goal of the "Renewables Vision 2020" coalition is to achieve at least 10 percent of basic chemical building blocks arising from renewable, plant-derived sources by the year 2020 — a five-fold increase over today's level — and at least 50 percent by 2050. That could mean everything from car tires to plastic soda bottles to paint would in the future be made from renewable sources, such as corn.

"For all economic purposes, fossil fuels will run out over the next 20 to 30 years. If we allow that to happen before we've found renewable replacements, it will seriously threaten the economic growth, healthy standards of living and strong economic security Americans now enjoy," said Floyd Schultz, a corn grower from Plainfield, Ill., and chairman of the national Corn Growers Association (NCGA) Customer and Business Development Action Team.

NCGA hosted the May 7 coalition meeting.

The initial work of this coalition began with leadership from NCGA and is consistent with NCGA's vision and goals to make the corn industry worth \$40 billion at the farm gate and to invest its dollars in research that pays dividends to U.S. corn growers.

Not just talk or an effort to jump on the popular "green" bandwagon, this coalition is active, aggressive and has a strategic game plan for accomplishing its ambitious vision and goals.

Step one was the development of the "Plant/Crop-Based Renewable Resources 2020" document which outlined the coalition's vision and goals. In February, more than 60 companies, associations and government agencies signed an historic agreement to support the vision. The second and current step is the preparation of technology roadmaps for use by government and industry. The final step is the actual research and business development efforts that will make renewable technologies successful.

As evidenced by last week's meeting, the coalition is now moving quickly to make that vision a reality.

An executive steering committee is establishing a charter and will oversee implementation of the vision. The committee is chaired by industry business consultant Jim McLaren, who represents the NCGA, and co-chaired by Ronald Eirickson, Great Lakes Chemical Corporation.

An industry workshop, targeted for August, will invite a wide range of industry experts to identify renewable technology targets. Technology roadmaps that will help guide public and private research and development efforts will follow. The resulting development of renewable technologies will prevent "major global problems" that will result from the depletion of fossil fuels, but will cost money.

How much?

"We're talking about billions and billions of dollars worth of changes in the United States," said coalition chairman Jim McLaren for NCGA. "Attracting the kind of coordination and support this vision requires couldn't be left to one company or industry alone. This requires—and very much is — a multi-industry effort to make significant change in U.S. production."

The executive committee

will reach out broadly across the United States to identify the best talents and minds to accomplish coalition goals. Supporters are enthusiastic and anxious to get on with the job at hand NCGA will continue to serve as a catalyst to make this happen.

Serving on the executive committee are A. E. Staley; B.F. Goodrich Co.; Catgill; Corn Refiners Association; Dow AgroSciences; Genecor International; Grain Processing Corporation; Great Lakes Chemical Corporation; Inverizon International, Inc.; Monsanto; National Corn

Association; National Renewable Energy Laboratory; USDA Forest Service; and the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Industrial Technologies. Other farm commodity groups are expected to participate more fully in the future.

For more information on the Renewable Vision 2020 or a copy of the "Plant/Crop-Based Renewable Resources 2020" document, contact the national Corn Growers Association at (314) 275-9915 or visit their website at <http://www.nega.com/15D/E/page15.html>.



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