

MBI International Receives USDA Funding For Ethanol Research



LANSING, Mich. — MBI International announced it has entered into a cooperative agreement with the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS), whereby MBI International will receive \$354,000 to conduct research to improve the uses of dried distillers grains and grass biomass in ethanol production.

MBI's effort is part of a broad project initiative between MBI, the USDA-ARS and South Dakota State University to develop new technologies to enhance the value of the by-products of ethanol production.

MBI has been working with Heartland Grain Fuels (Aberdeen, S.D.) for the past few years in an effort to provide new technologies for the ethanol industry to increase profitability beyond conventional methodologies.

One such technology in development is the "quick germ" process of ethanol production, which improves ethanol yield from corn and offers higher-protein dried distillers grains as a by-product.

The collaboration between MBI, USDA, and SDSU will also address the development of technologies that could allow for warm season grasses

to use as feedstocks for chemicals, materials, energy and fuels, broadening the range beyond traditional feedstock sources. The entire project initiative of \$648,000 includes funding at South Dakota State University and the USDA-ARS facility at South Dakota State.

Senator Tim Johnson from South Dakota is a leading advocate for renewable fuels, particularly biodiesel and ethanol. He was instrumental in passing a Renewable Fuels Title as part of the FY-2002 Farm Bill and including a renewable fuels standard as part of the 2002 energy bill.

"The benefits of this research will help lead to increased renewable fuel production, less dependence upon foreign oil, increased farm income, job creation and economic growth in rural America, and environmental and public health gains. The \$648,000 earmarked for value-added ethanol production will help build upon the work I helped start last year at SDSU to conduct research on increased production of ethanol from corn and other biomass crops," Johnson said.

Dr. Kevin Kephart, director of the Agricultural Experi-

ment Station at South Dakota State University, explained that SDSU and many other land-grant institutions are broadening their research, extension, and teaching efforts to include agriculturally-based energy production systems. He emphasized the benefits in working with MBI.

"Agriculture will be a part of the solution to the nation's future energy concerns. Partnerships between land-grant universities, USDA-ARS, and industry as a means of technology implementation will be critical to the success of efforts in ag-based renewable energy. The work and expertise at MBI complements our interests very well and we look forward to working in this new partnership," said Kephart.

Dr. Mark Stowers, president of MBI, said that the USDA project is indicative of MBI's outreach projects with research universities across the country. Such collaboration provides a vehicle for MBI technology to be used throughout the country.

"We are very pleased to be working with South Dakota State University and the USDA-ARS on this project. We believe that this combined effort in South Dakota will

make significant contributions to the ethanol industry and will create a technology platform at South Dakota State University to make additional contributions in the future," said Stowers.

MBI International, a private, nonprofit, 501(c) 3 corporation, is focused on the development and commercialization of products via biotechnology that increase farm profitability, bring new food products and pharmaceuticals to market, protect

and clean up the environment, and reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

As an integral part of its mission, MBI partners with universities and other centers of excellence to complement world-class research with state of the art business and product development expertise. In achieving its mission, MBI creates new jobs and builds new businesses to stimulate the economy.

To learn more about MBI International, visit www.mbi.org.

Interest In White Corn

COLUMBUS, Ohio — White corn, a specialty crop used to make taco shells and corn chips, is receiving greater attention among Ohio growers looking for an alternative to yellow feed corn.

Ohio State University researchers have completed their sixth year of white corn performance trials to assist growers in choosing hybrids that exhibit certain agronomic traits, such as good yields, resistance to diseases and little or no stalk lodging.

"What we are trying to do is provide some baseline information as a benchmark for which hybrids to use — which ones exhibit the best agronomic characteristics and are suitable for Ohio's growing conditions," said Peter Thomison, an Ohio State agronomist.

Thomison said the need for white corn performance trials is increasing due to the gaining popularity of white corn among growers throughout the United States.

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