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Office of Public Affairs
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NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:

Jennifer Scoggins, (202) 586-4940

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DOE Announces Additional Steps in Developing Sustainable Biofuels Industry

Releases Results from Preliminary Intermediate Blends Report, Continues Commitment of Commercial Scale Biorefinery, Announces \$7 Million for New Biofuels Projects

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman and Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer today released the National Biofuels Action Plan (NBAP). The Plan, developed by an interagency board co-chaired by DOE and USDA, outlines specific action areas and goals toward achieving renewable fuels production targets. Secretary Bodman also announced additional steps the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is taking to support the development of a sustainable biofuels industry: research to enable increased use of biofuels, deployment of cellulosic biorefineries, and biofuels research and development.

“The challenge is to find ways to go farther and to go faster – we must progress to the next level,” said Secretary Bodman. “That means we must accelerate the development and deployment of next generation biofuels, fuels made from cellulose, algae and from other non-food products as well as fuels compatible with our existing energy infrastructure including renewable diesel, green gasoline and bio-butanol.”

Increasing the Use of Biofuels

U.S. consumers already use E10, gasoline blended with 10 percent ethanol, in conventional vehicles and other engines. In order to meet the goals set forth in the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) of 2007, however, the U.S. will likely need to use higher blends of ethanol in conventional vehicles. To assess the potential impacts of higher blends of ethanol such as E15 and E20, gasoline blended with 15 and 20 percent ethanol, on conventional vehicles and other gasoline engines, DOE initiated a testing program in August 2007.

A preliminary report released today by DOE’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory and Oak Ridge National Laboratory, provides results available to date from testing E15 and E20 on 13 vehicles and 28 small non-road engines, including lawn equipment and generators. The information reported today, along with data that will be collected over the course of this broad test program, will help determine whether higher blends of ethanol can be effectively used in conventional vehicles. The report showed that most of the regulated emissions with E15 and E20 were within the normal test variation, and no statistically-significant change was detected. While the data collected to date is encouraging, particularly with regard to regulated emissions, additional studies are needed on a wider range of vehicles and engines.

Supporting Deployment of New Technologies

The deployment of cellulosic biorefineries is a critical pathway to meeting renewable fuels production mandates. Today, DOE announced additional funding with POET, LLC of Sioux Falls, S.D. This commercial-scale cellulosic biorefinery project was originally announced by Secretary Bodman in February 2007; today an additional phase of funding was announced. POET received \$3.7 million in the first phase of funding under a

cooperative agreement that covers initial design, permitting, and preparation of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation. Today in the second phase the Secretary announced POET would be awarded an additional award for up to \$76.3 million in federal funding, subject to annual appropriations. Today's funding supports final design, construction, and commissioning of the project to develop an economically viable cellulose-to-ethanol biorefinery that employs alternative energy technologies will be co-located at POET's Emmetsburg, Iowa ethanol plant and will use corn cob, and potentially corn fiber, to increase plant production of ethanol by up to 25 million gallons per year. Subject to annual appropriations, DOE's total investment in the POET project is up to \$80 million, with an expected total project cost of nearly \$200 million.

Pyrolysis Oils Projects

While supporting deployment and increased biofuels usage, DOE continues to focus on research and development of advanced biofuels technologies. Today, DOE announced the selection of five advanced biofuels projects up to \$7 million, subject to annual appropriations. The five projects selected will develop cost-effective, environmentally friendly ways to convert non-food feedstocks into stabilized pyrolysis oils. These biologically-derived oils are generated through the rapid heating of biomass, for the ultimate production of transport fuel. Pyrolysis oils offer the potential of a greenhouse-gas neutral, renewable, and domestically produced alternative to petroleum-based fuels.

Five advanced biofuels projects received negotiation of awards:

- **UOP LLC (Des Plaines, Ill.)** With partners: Ensyn Corp, DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (Golden, Colo.), DOE's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (Richland, Wash.) and USDA-Agricultural Research Service.
- **Virginia Polytechnic Institute (Blacksburg, Va. and New Brunswick, N.J.)** With partner: Rutgers University.
- **Iowa State University (Ames, Iowa and Houston, Texas)** With partner: ConocoPhillips.
- **RTI International (Research Triangle Park, N.C. and Decatur, Ill.)** With partner: Archer Daniel Midland Co.
- **University of Massachusetts-Amherst (Amherst, Mass.)** With partner: Renewable Oil International.

For more information about the National Biofuels Action Plan and DOE's biofuels efforts visit:

<http://eere.energy.gov> and <http://www.sc.doe.gov>

For the full intermediate blend report visit: http://feerc.ornl.gov/publications/Int_blends_Rpt_1.pdf

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