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Ethanol Process Efficiency and Net Energy Balance Improving

Topics to be Featured at American Coalition for Ethanol Conference August 3-5

Sioux Falls, SD (July 20, 2010) – Two recent studies find that the efficiency of the ethanol production process and the resulting net energy balance of ethanol itself are both increasingly positive. The technology innovations driving these efficiency improvements will be featured at the American Coalition for Ethanol's (ACE) upcoming national ethanol conference in Kansas City, August 3-5.

Dr. Steffen Mueller, Principal Research Economist for the Energy Resources Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago, published a paper on U.S. dry mill ethanol production and found significant energy improvements compared to 2001. Compared to 2001, today's ethanol production requires 28 percent less thermal energy and 32.1 percent less electricity per gallon, yet 5.3 percent more ethanol can be produced from the same bushel of corn. Read the full report: http://www.ethanol.org/pdf/contentmgmt/Ethanol_production_efficiency_U_of_IL_spring_2010.pdf

Innovations in ethanol production efficiency will be featured in a panel discussion at the ACE conference on Wednesday morning, August 4. Charlie Kroeger of US Water Services will present information on "zero liquid discharge" and how some ethanol plants are able to recycle all water in the ethanol production process. Mike Jerke of Chippewa Valley Ethanol Co. in Benson, Minnesota will discuss innovations at this locally owned ethanol plant, including the installation of a biomass gasifier to displace some of the natural gas demand.

These types of technology innovations are leading to an improved net energy balance for ethanol, according to a recent study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Measuring all conventional fossil fuel energy used in the production of 1 gallon of ethanol, the report found that for every 1 BTU (British Thermal Unit) of energy required to make ethanol, 2.3 BTUs of energy are produced in return. This 1:2.3 net energy balance is even more positive than the 1:1.77 net energy balance in a 2004 USDA report. Read the full report: http://www.ethanol.org/pdf/contentmgmt/USDA_etoh_energy_efficiency_June_2010.pdf

To register for the conference, visit http://www.ethanol.org/index.php?id=44&parentid=30; doing so by July 23 will allow you to take advantage of the lowest registration rate.

A keynote address on energy independence will be delivered on August 4 by Anne Korin, co-director of the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security and co-author of "Turning Oil Into Salt: Energy Independence Through Fuel Choice." Marc Rauch, co-founder of The Auto Channel, will provide the closing conference address on August 5, speaking about the divide-and-conquer tactics the oil industry has used to prevent alternative fuels from general acceptance and how the ethanol industry can overcome this.

Other key topics to be covered at the ACE conference include: the future of E15, the worsening carbon footprint of petroleum, a timeline for when next-generation ethanol will meet the Renewable Fuels Standard, and more. View the full agenda for the event here: http://www.ethanol.org/index.php?id=94&parentid=30.

Members of the media are invited to attend and cover the event. Pre-register by contacting Kristin Brekke (kbrekke@ethanol.org) to secure a complimentary media pass.

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The American Coalition for Ethanol (ACE) is the grassroots voice of the U.S. ethanol industry, a national trade association for the ethanol industry with nearly 1,500 members nationwide, including farmers, ethanol producers, commodity organizations, businesses supplying goods and services to the ethanol industry, rural electric cooperatives, and individuals supportive of increased production and use of ethanol. For more information about ethanol or ACE, visit www.ethanol.org or call (605) 334-3381.