



**U.S. Department of Defense**  
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## News Transcript

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**Presenter: Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England**

**September 13, 2006**

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### **DoD Biobased Showcase and Educational Event at the Pentagon**

**PARTICIPANTS:**

GORDON ENGLAND, DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE;

MIKE JOHANNIS, SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE;

SENATOR TOM HARKIN (D-IA);

SENATOR RICHARD LUGAR (R-IN);

REPRESENTATIVE MARCY KAPTUR (D-OH)

MR. GRONE: Good morning. I am Philip Grone, deputy undersecretary of Defense for Installations and Environment. I welcome you here today to kick off the Department of Defense Biobased Product Event.

Although the first of its kind to be held here in the Pentagon, as you will hear in a moment, the department has been very proactive in the area of green procurement and biobased products for a number of years.

To kick off this event, we are privileged to have many special guests with us here today. And while acknowledging the total list of special attendees would take some time, I would like to recognize in particular our distinguished secretaries and members of Congress here with us today.

So beginning certainly to my immediate left, the deputy secretary of Defense, Gordon England -- (applause) -- the secretary of Agriculture and former governor of the fair state of Nebraska, the honorable Mike Johanns -- (applause) -- the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, the senator from Iowa, Tom Harkin -- (applause) -- the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a leader in agriculture, the senator from Indiana, Richard Lugar -- (applause) -- and a member of the Subcommittees on Defense and Agriculture of the Committee on Appropriations in the House, the representative from the state of Ohio, Marcy Kaptur. (Applause.)

In addition, with us today are my boss, the undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Mr. Ken Krieg -- (applause) -- Keith Eastin, the assistant secretary of the Army for Installations and Environment -- (applause) -- Major General Loren Reno, Supply Corps, United States Navy, deputy director, Defense Logistics Agency -- Air Force. (Applause.) It says Navy here -- Air Force. We were being joint there for a second, sir. Mr. Shay Assad, director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy here in DOD -- (applause) -- and Mr. Ed Pinero, the federal environmental executive. Thank you, Ed, for your commitment. (Applause.)

As many of you know, certainly those of you who work in this department or any department of the government, moving the department's key programs forward without senior leadership support is enormously difficult.

The deputy secretary of Defense, Gordon England, embraced the concept long ago in his career in industry to find ways of enhancing the mission while protecting the environment, enhancing the stewardship of those trusted natural resources that are left for us from generation to generation. And in his tenure here in the Department of Defense, he has continued to do so.

But certainly those of us who know the deputy secretary also know that he is results-driven, results-oriented. So we want programs that work, work effectively, that support and enhance the mission and advance the mission of the Department of Defense.

And to speak about how we're doing and the approach that we are taking to the biobase question, the deputy secretary of Defense, Gordon England. (Applause.)

MR. ENGLAND: Phil, thank you. And good morning. Thanks to everybody for being here this morning. I thank you for

coming out to take a look at the department's Biobased Products Initiative. It is terrific you're all here.

Mr. Secretary, I have a special thank-you to you because you and the Department of Agriculture have been great partners. And Mr. Secretary Johanns, I do thank you. I thank you for your personal leadership. And Senator Harkin and Senator Lugar and Congresswoman Kaptur, I thank you also, and also all the members of Congress for your partnership, but especially for your leadership in this very, very important initiative.

I will tell you, we are proud in the Department of Defense to be a leader in this biobased products effort, and, by the way, a leader also in environmental stewardship. The department -- as you know, we have the largest workforce. We have the largest budget of any federal agency. And therefore, we are also the largest buyer of products of anyone in the federal government.

So, frankly, we have a lot of market clout, and the decisions we make affect markets. They affect the products that producers decide to make. And so that gives us an opportunity, but also places on the department a responsibility in this area to set the standards and to lead the way for the federal government. And we are pleased to do that and we are doing that.

Biobased products are an integral part of our overall strategy. Some people call it a green strategy. I just call it the department's strategy, a very central part of our strategic approach to national security. Many of these products are substitutes for products based on nonrenewable natural resources like oil and natural gas.

So when we have substitutes, it supports the President's initiatives and the national interest to reduce our dependence on foreign sources of energy. It makes our nation more secure, and that's what the Department of Defense is all about is making our nation more secure.

Our strategy also supports our long-term national security interest by protecting and preserving the environment for future generations so they, too, can enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness to the fullest here in America.

And, by the way, when we do this right, in almost every case we end up saving the taxpayers' money. Invariably, if you are more effective at what you do, you're also more efficient at what you do. And this is all about being effective.

Now, to be clear, this is not like the latest health food fad where you go to a specialty shop and you buy lots of additional expensive supplements and ingredients. This is about substituting an equally effective product or approach to meet a requirement you have that may well end up costing less in the end.

When I looked over the program for this event, including the booths that are set up here -- and, by the way, I personally am going to take the time to view as many of these booths as I can this morning -- I was impressed by the wide variety of products that are included here today. And I do hope that everyone here will take the opportunity to have a look at all the displays you can today.

Now, fortunately, this department's confidence in biobased approaches is not based on theory alone. DoD facilities, from Washington State to Texas to Georgia to Maine, are using biobased products. And there's already a number of great success stories, and I'm just going to mention three of those.

The first is at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. In the past, if you wanted to remove paint and adhesives from ships, which is a big job if you're at the naval shipyard, they used methylene chloride product. It was a volatile, hazardous air pollutant. And then we made the switch to a soy-based paint stripper.

It has fewer health risks. It's environmentally friendly. And, by the way, it's a lot easier to do. You don't have to do all the protective measures. You don't have to have ventilators, don't have to have respirators. And so it just makes good sense -- better, and again, costs us less money.

At Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, they were looking for a biobased floor cleaner. At that base they do not have a wastewater treatment plant. All the wastewater actually goes to the city wastewater disposal. And we didn't want, you know, hazardous waste having to be treated at the city wastewater. So, again, they came out with another soy-based product, and it was equally effective and it was also much better. And, by the way, in that case it saved them \$12,000 just in the procurement cost; again, costs less and did a better job.

In Homestead Joint Reserve Base, theirs is in product and education; and also the United States Marine Corps, because they have adopted biodiesel and neighborhood electrical vehicles, and they both were recipients of the White House awards, the Closing the Circle awards. So again, I congratulate all these great folks in the Department of Defense who are doing all this good work every single day.

And I also thank everyone here. I thank you for your leadership, for your commitment and for your service, and particularly for everyone here who's wearing the cloth of our nation. I thank you for what you do for America every single day. And God bless you and God bless your families.

I'll tell you, what we do in national defense is all about preserving and protecting our liberty and freedoms for future

generations. And this effort goes hand in hand. This is about protecting America for future generations. So I thank you. God bless you all. Thanks for the opportunity to be here. (Applause.)

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