

Jennifer Martin, USDA, (202) 720-8188
Jeff Sherwood, DOE, (202) 586-5806

DOE and USDA Announce More than \$10 Million in Bioenergy Plant Feedstock Research

WASHINGTON, DC –July 31, 2008-- Agriculture Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics Gale Buchanan and Energy Department (DOE) Under Secretary for Science Raymond Orbach today announced plans to award 10 grants totaling more than \$10 million to accelerate fundamental research in the development of cellulosic biofuels.

“USDA is committed to fostering a sustainable domestic biofuels industry at home in rural America,” Buchanan said. “These grants will broaden the sources of energy from many crops as well as improve the efficiency and options among renewable fuels.”

“Cellulosic biofuels offer one of the best near- to mid-term alternatives we have, on the energy production side, to reduce reliance and imported oil and cut greenhouse gas emissions, while continuing to meet the nation’s transportation energy needs,” Orbach said. “Developing cost-effective means of producing cellulosic biofuels on a national scale poses major scientific challenges—these grants will help in developing the type of transformational breakthroughs needed in basic science to make this happen.”

The grants will be awarded under a joint DOE-USDA program begun in 2006 which aims to accelerate fundamental research in biomass genomics to further the use of cellulosic plant material for bioenergy and biofuels. DOE's Office of Biological and Environmental Research will provide \$8.8 million while USDA’s Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service will provide \$2 million to the following institutions over a three year period:

- Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research (Ithaca, NY), \$882,000
- Colorado State University (Fort Collins, CO), \$1,500,000
- University of Georgia (Athens, GA), \$1,295,000
- University of Georgia(Athens, GA), \$1,200,000
- University of Massachusetts (Amherst, MA), \$1,200,000
- Michigan State University (East Lansing, MI), \$540,000
- Pennsylvania State University (State College, PA), \$587,191
- Purdue University (West Lafayette, IN), \$1,200,000
- Oregon State University (Corvallis, OR), \$1,200,000
- Oregon State University (Corvallis, OR), \$1,200,000

Cellulosic biofuels are made from a wide variety of plant materials or non-food based feedstocks and energy crops.

For more information on the individual projects and the DOE-USDA biomass genomics research program, visit: <http://genomicsgtl.energy.gov/research/DOEUSDA/index.shtml>.