

Outreach Subcommittee

Report to the Committee
May 2007

Charge to the FACA

- To advise the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the points of contact concerning
 - the technical focus and direction of requests for proposals issued under the Initiative; and
 - procedures for reviewing and evaluating the proposals;
- **To facilitate consultations and partnerships among Federal and State agencies, agricultural producers, industry, consumers, the research community, and other interested groups to carry out program activities relating to the Initiative; and**
- To evaluate and perform strategic planning on program activities relating to the Initiative.

Subcommittee Opinion

The FACA is in a unique position to facilitate interaction and support public outreach by the agencies due to its credibility as a group of third party experts.

Outreach Plan

- Limited media events to announce work products
 - Vision and Roadmap
- Grassroots efforts
 - Speakers bureau of FACA members
 - PowerPoint presentation
 - Convert to video

- The Federal Technical Advisory Committee for Biomass Research and Development
 - has published a new Vision which sets goals for biofuels, bioproducts and bioenergy.
 - has gathered input from industry leaders, farm groups, state governments, university researchers and everyday people and is developing a Roadmap to reach those goals.
 - is focused on the long-term overall national shift from a petroleum economy to bio-renewable economy.

Today's biofuels, ethanol and biodiesel, are already playing a growing role in reducing our dependence on foreign supplies of petroleum for gasoline, diesel fuel and heating oil, while providing good jobs here in the US.

- The subsidies on these fuels create new demand for crops and have reduced the deficiency payments paid to farmers when crop price are low. Ethanol and biodiesel are actually reducing the payments made to farmers more than they cost in tax payer support!

(Can we substantiate this?)

- New research to make fuels from non-food biomass shows real promise and should become a reality by 2012. In the mean time the country needs to figure out how to transport and store these new raw materials and finished products. We need big investments in new infrastructure to handle the new energy products and that means jobs all over the country.

The rising cost of petroleum and natural gas have hurt the chemical industry, especially plastics, in the US. Plastics made from corn, soybeans, sugars and other biobased materials are already coming into the market. We need an accelerated program to develop new chemical products from natural materials we can produce year in and year out here at home.

By capturing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and converting it into carbohydrates, plants lock up greenhouse gases. Chemicals made from those carbohydrates have been shown in most cases to be better for the environment.

In 2001 burning and gasification of biomass in the US to make steam and electricity accounted for 3.2 quadrillion BTU of energy or over 3% of our power generation needs. Almost as much as wind, solar and hydroelectric combined!

Burning biomass alone or in combination with coal reduces emissions of greenhouse gases and smog forming compounds compared to coal alone.

The Vision of the Federal Technical Advisory Committee for Biomass Research and Development is that to utilize biomass most effectively will require a balance of fuels, chemical products and power generation from the same sources in what has come to be called a biorefinery.