

1/26/04

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ISU Hosts 2004 Biobased Industry Outlook Conference

Iowa State University will be hosting the 2004 Biobased Industry Outlook Conference on March 7 and 8 at the Scheman Building in Ames. The conference, targeted to those interested in the bioindustry, will give an overview of current state of the industry and its future.

"This conference is an exciting way for producers, developers and manufacturers to find out more information about the bioindustry, not only in Iowa, but also in the Midwest," said Jill Euken, Iowa State University Extension field specialist.

The conference opens on Sunday evening, March 7, with a reception and poster session that features research projects funded by the Iowa Biotechnology Bioproducts Consortium (BBC) and the Ames Laboratory Biorenewables Consortium (BRC).

The posters on display during the reception will highlight significant accomplishments and the impact of these projects on the State of Iowa and the Midwest. Examples of projects funded by the BBC include biodegradable de-icers from corn steep water, value-added products from syngas fermentation and constructed wetlands for wastewater and land reclamation.

The projects funded by the BRC involve interdisciplinary research teams and include oxidation of soybean oils, novel biolubricants, adhesives from biorenewable materials and environmentally friendly wood preservatives.

The next morning, the conference will begin with a welcome from Dr. Stanley Johnson, Vice Provost for Iowa State University Extension. Speakers from the Department of Energy, USDA, the Iowa Energy Center and BIOWA will present different views and opportunities within the bioindustry during the morning session. Following those speakers, a panel discussion will highlight success stories from manufacturers of biobased products in the Midwest.

Mike Blouin, the director of the Iowa Department of Economic Development, will speak during the luncheon about the Battelle Report and its implications on the future of the bioindustry. The Battelle Report, scheduled to be released in February, was commissioned by Iowa officials to outline the strategic direction for economic development and investment.

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2004 Conference

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The first afternoon session will lead participants through the links of biobased value chains and provide a description of the challenges and opportunities of each link. Experts from Iowa State University will discuss what is currently being done in each link and where the research is headed to strengthen the bioindustry.

Following that session, Marvin Duncan from the USDA; Steve Devlin from CIRAS, a part of Iowa State University Extension; and Bruce Coney of the Central Iowa Procurement Center will present information about the newly formed Federal Biobased Products Preferred Procurement Program.

Sponsors for the Biobased Industry Outlook Conference include the Office for Biorenewables Programs, BOWA Development Association, Iowa Biotechnology Byproducts Consortium, Biorenewable Resources Consortium, Iowa State University Extension, Iowa Energy Center and Center for Crops Utilization Research.

For more information about the Biobased Industry Outlook Conference, visit the conference Web site at www.ciras.iastate.edu/bioindustry/bioconference.