



Contact: Robert Cleaves
207-228-7376

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USA Biomass Launches National Education Campaign with Energy Foundation Grant

Focus on environmental and GHG-reducing benefits of biomass energy

Portland, ME — USA Biomass, the nation's leading association of biopower companies, has been awarded a \$100,000 grant from *the Energy Foundation* to promote the importance of renewable, biomass energy generation in meeting the nation's growing energy needs, while reducing our "carbon footprint" and promoting a healthy environment. The Energy Foundation is a partnership of major foundations interested in sustainable energy. USA Biomass will provide matching funds toward this nationwide outreach effort.

"USA Biomass is a leading voice for our nation's growing biomass energy industry — which 'recycles' forest, agricultural and urban wood waste by using it as fuel to generate clean electricity," said Bentham Paulos, Program Director for Renewable Power at the Energy Foundation. "Through this grant, we hope to encourage and promote their longstanding efforts to increase the understanding and use of this valuable, renewable energy source."

"We appreciate the Energy Foundation's confidence in our continuing efforts to educate our nation's leaders about the long-term environmental benefits of biomass energy," said USA Biomass President Bob Cleaves. "We have a great story to tell."

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“Not only is biomass energy effective in reducing global warming emissions, but it also creates economic opportunities for rural America, diverts tons of waste from our landfills, reduces the need for open field burning of ag waste, and improves the health of our forests. And not enough people know that bioenergy is America’s largest source of renewable energy, greater than hydro, wind, geothermal, and solar combined.”

The Department of Energy (DOE) estimates that biomass-based power currently provides nearly 45 billion kilowatt hours of electricity, or about 1.2% of the nation’s electric sales. DOE projects that overtime, biomass could supply as much as 14% of the nation’s power needs. Biomass in all forms, including for heat and industry, power generation, and motor fuels, supplied 3.5% of America’s total energy supply in 2007.

According to recent studies, the greenhouse gas reductions from operating biomass plants are significant. For every megawatt hour of biomass power, approximately 1.6 tons of CO₂ are avoided, resulting in a projected reduction of almost 30 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually.

USA Biomass is the only national organization devoted solely to the growth and long-term viability of biomass-powered electric generation — a growing industry that is strengthening America’s rural economy, promoting energy independence and reducing carbon emissions. It has 41 member companies operating 80 power plants in 20 different states. These power plants use a broad range of biomass fuels — from wood chips in Maine, bagasse in Florida and rice hulls in Louisiana, to forest waste in Arizona and orchard prunings in California. Their website is www.usabiomass.org.

The Energy Foundation’s mission is to advance energy efficiency and renewable energy — new technologies that are essential components of a clean energy future — with a special focus in the United States and China, as the world’s largest energy markets. Their website is www.ef.org.

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