

LOCAL BIOENERGY:

A workshop on production and use of perennial energy grasses

**July 10, 2010
Decatur Civic Center**



Perennial grasses – including native prairie grasses and Miscanthus – can be grown for renewable energy and also to provide conservation benefits. While large scale production of advanced biofuels and bioproducts is not here yet, Illinois farmers and entrepreneurs are already starting to plant the crops, make the equipment, and build the projects to use biomass for heat and power.

The Local Bioenergy Workshop will provide practical information about cellulosic energy crops from field to furnace. Speakers and exhibitors will highlight farming methods, processing equipment, and grass-burning furnaces and discuss how to establish profitable bioenergy enterprises on a small, local scale. Workshop sessions will also address wildlife habitat and other benefits of perennial energy grasses, market development, and incentive programs for production and use of biomass feedstock. Time for networking and visiting exhibits is built into the schedule. Participants are invited to visit local energy grass plots after the workshop concludes.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

This workshop is for everyone interested in growing or using perennial energy grasses for heat or power. This includes farmers, landowners, farm managers, scientists, conservation practitioners and educators, entrepreneurs, agri-business and utility managers, and people interested in using biomass for residential or commercial heating. People interested in the potential benefits of perennial energy crops – CO₂ reduction, wildlife habitat, soil conservation, water quality, and more – are encouraged to attend.

- TIME:** Saturday, July 10, 2010 – 8:00 AM to 3:15 PM
Note: Optional energy grass plot tours will start after the workshop concludes.
- PLACE:** Decatur Civic Center, #1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza, Decatur, IL
For map and directions, go to www.decaturciviccenter.org/directions.htm
- COST:** \$20 for advance registration on or before July 8.
\$30 for on-site registration, subject to space availability.
- REGISTRATION:** Mail or bring payment to the Agricultural Watershed Institute, 4004 College Park Road, Decatur, IL 62521. Or register on-line at <http://extension.illinois.edu/go/bioenergy>.
- LODGING:** For link to Decatur area hotels, go to the above Decatur Civic Center web page.
- FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION,** contact Steve John, AWI, (217) 877-5640 or sfjohn@agwatershed.org.

PRE-WORKSHOP EVENT: SANGAMON WATERSHED CELEBRATION

On Friday, July 9, AWI and cosponsors will hold the 6th annual Sangamon Watershed Celebration in the Decatur Civic Center. This event will include a reception, program and concert with the theme “Home on the Prairie”. The reception will start at 6:00 PM and feature Local Food, an art sale, and displays. The program and concert will start at 7:30 PM. It will include a presentation on the prairie theme and music by singer-songwriter Ann Zimmerman from Salina, Kansas. Tickets for the Celebration are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. Advance registration including both the Sangamon Watershed Celebration and Local Bioenergy Workshop is \$25.

Sponsored by: The Agricultural Watershed Institute
Co-sponsors: University of Illinois Extension, City of Decatur,
Decatur Audubon Society

Local Bioenergy Workshop Agenda

- 8:00 – 9:00 Registration and continental breakfast – Exhibits will be open**
- 9:00 – 9:15 Welcome and Opening remarks**
- 9:15 – 9:45 The Local Bioenergy Vision and How to Achieve It**
Steve John, Agricultural Watershed Institute
- 9:45 – 10:15 Miscanthus: Moving from Research Plots to Illinois Farms**
Eric Rund, Rund Farms International AGtivities
- 10:15 – 10:30 Break**
- 10:30 – 11:00 Research on Prairie Grass as an Energy Crop**
D. K. Lee, University of Illinois, Department of Crop Sciences
- 11:00 – 11:30 Growing Prairie Grasses for Bioenergy and Wildlife**
Fred Circle, FDC Enterprises Grassland Services
- 11:30 – 12:00 Field-to-Furnace Supply Chain**
Ted Funk, University of Illinois Extension, Agricultural Engineering
- 12:00 – 1:30 Lunch followed by time for networking and visiting exhibits**
- 1:30 – 2:00 An Ecological Perspective on Prairie Plants as Bioenergy Feedstock**
Daryl Smith, Tallgrass Prairie Center, Cedar Falls, Iowa
- 2:00 – 2:30 USDA Biomass Incentives and Possible Future Directions**
Harry Baumes, USDA Office of Energy Policy and New Uses
- 2:30 – 3:00 Using the Market Maker Website to Develop a Biomass Market in Illinois**
Darlene Knipe, U of I Extension, Marketing & Business Development Specialist
- 3:00 – 3:15 Wrap-up and Adjourn**

Plot tour:

Workshop participants are invited to visit local energy grass plots after the workshop. Maps will be provided. Tour stops include on-farm prairie grass buffers and Richland Community College/Progress City demonstration plots with Miscanthus, switchgrass, mixed prairie grasses, and sorghum.

Exhibits and Demonstrations:

Exhibitors will showcase production, processing, energy conversion, and conservation benefits of perennial energy grasses. Partial list of commercial exhibitors and equipment displays:

- Blade Energy Crops – Switchgrass and high-biomass sorghum seed
- Mechanical transplanter used to plant Miscanthus plugs
- Grass handling and processing equipment
- Pellet Pros pellet mill – Live demonstration of making biomass pellets
- A-Maize-ing Heat furnace and boiler – Specially modified to burn grass pellets