



New Jersey Board of Public Utilities

PRESS RELEASE

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Board Report Describes Value and Potential of Biomass as Major Resource to Meet NJ Energy Needs *Report that assesses biomass potential is now available*

(NEWARK, NJ) -- Biomass has potential to help New Jersey diversify its energy sources, reduce reliance on foreign oil, and decrease its use of power generated by carbon dioxide emitting fossil fuels.

That's the conclusion of a report commissioned by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPUB) and completed by the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. President Jeanne M. Fox announced today that the report is posted at www.njaes.rutgers.edu/bioenergy -- links also will be available at www.nj.gov/bpu , www.nj.gov/emp and www.njcleanenergy.com.

"The Board of Public Utilities has focused its efforts in the last few years on fully assessing and developing New Jersey's renewable energy potential in wind and solar. Now we are enhancing that overall renewable energy picture and our overall energy planning efforts with this biomass report," said President Fox, Chair of the NJ Energy Master Plan (NJEMP) Committee. The NJEMP is targeted for release next month.

Biomass includes such materials as certain agricultural crops; food processing residues; wood waste; waste oils, fats and greases; recycled materials; and landfill gas. The report assesses the characteristics and quantity of commercially viable biomass resources and technologies. It concludes that 65 percent of the estimated 8.2 million dry tons of biomass New Jersey produces annually could be leveraged to help meet New Jersey's electricity or transportation fuels needs. Biomass could deliver up to 1,100 MW of power or the equivalent of enough power for nearly 1 million homes for one year -- or the biomass resources could be used to produce about 300 million gallons of fuel for transportation. Most of the biomass resource, says the report, is in the central and northeastern part of the state. It also notes that farms and forests are important potential sources of biomass.

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For the study, Rutgers developed a one-of-a-kind “Bioenergy Calculator” that can compute the potential for generating biopower and biofuel from existing biomass in New Jersey for 2007, 2010, 2015 and 2020. Data can be sorted and compared based on parameters such as existing technologies and county location.

“Helping more biofuels companies locate in New Jersey can only spur the market for our farmers’ crops and agricultural waste through increased demand for feedstocks,” said New Jersey Agriculture Secretary Charles M. Kuperus. “However, this inventory also documents the enormous amount of waste available that can also be turned into energy. This helps us address two issues at once – the potential new markets for our farmers through more varied energy production, as well as the future reduction of our waste stream.”

The 15-person research team included 12 faculty and staff from NJAES. The remaining team members are affiliated with the Burlington County Solid Waste Office, Princeton University and New Jersey Corporation for Advanced Technology. The biomass inventory has its roots in the bi-weekly meetings of the multi-agency Biofuels Action Group at the Department of Agriculture, which was formed in June 2006 and includes representation from various departments and agencies, all working to create the most encouraging environment for biofuels and other alternative energy companies to locate in New Jersey. After a discussion between Rutgers and NJBPU representatives at that meeting, the university decided to undertake the inventory as a way to help biomass energy companies find the feedstocks they need and determine where in the state they are concentrated.

“The report provides a framework for a statewide bioenergy strategic plan,” said Robert M. Goodman, Rutgers Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources and Executive Director New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. “With this information, New Jersey can develop policies that will help move New Jersey into the forefront of bioenergy innovation.”

The report also has recommendations to help New Jersey develop policies that will promote and support the development of biomass in the state.

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About the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU)

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities is a state agency and regulatory authority mandated to ensure safe, adequate, and proper utility services at reasonable rates for New Jersey customers. Critical services regulated by the NJBPU include natural gas, electricity, water, wastewater, telecommunications and cable television. The Board has general oversight responsibility for monitoring utility service, responding to consumer complaints, and investigating utility accidents. To find out more about the NJBPU, visit our web site at www.nj.gov/bpu.