

10/27/09

Contact: Laura Probyn, probyn@msu.edu, 517-432-1555, ext. 175
or
Dennis Pennington, pennin34@msu.edu, 269-671-2412, ext. 221

LEARN ABOUT ALTERNATIVE ENERGY AT DEC. 1 BIO eCONFERENCE

EAST LANSING, Mich. -- Farmers, entrepreneurs, local officials and others who are interested in bioenergy can learn more about the status and potential of this growing industry by attending the 2009 Bio eConference, "Growing the Bioeconomy: Solutions for Sustainability <http://www.bioeconomyconference.org/>," Dec. 1 at 9 a.m. in the Hannah Community Center.

"This conference will bring together speakers from across the country in a virtual conference," said Dennis Pennington, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension <http://www.msue.msu.edu/> bioenergy educator based at the Kellogg Biological Station <http://www.kbs.msu.edu/>. "Off-site and local speakers will be featured as well as webcast presentations from other universities."

The Bio eConference will bring education and information via the Internet to participants across the upper Midwest. Twelve host sites will share content through high-speed communication systems to promote agriculturally based sustainable solutions to global climate change and energy supply. The conference will provide an opportunity for participants and experts to discuss biomass production issues, federal programs and policies and economics of producing biomass for energy.

James E. Lovelock, Ph.D., an independent scientist, theorist and an international thinker on global environmental science, will kick off the conference with his keynote address, "Conversion of Agricultural Residues Into Biochar for Incorporation Into Agricultural Soils as the Solution to Global Climate Change."

Other session topics will focus on net greenhouse gas emission from biofuel systems, non-traditional feedstocks, advances in biofuels and bioenergy economic and policy issues.

It will include prerecorded remarks from Secretary of Agriculture Thomas Vilsack and Secretary of Energy Steven Chu.

The conference will run from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. The registration cost is \$60 per person for those attending live, which gives participants the added value of networking and access to a special morning presentation about biomass procurement. For those who plan to view it from a personal computer in another location, the cost is \$50.

Visit <http://web2.msue.msu.edu/bioeconomy/> or call MSU Agriculture and Natural Resources Conference Services at 517-353-3175 to register for the live conference. If participating online from a personal computer, visit <http://www.bioeconomyconference.org/> and click on registration options.

For more information, contact Pennington at 269-671-2412 or Mark Seamon, MSU Extension bioeconomy innovation counselor at 989-758-2500.

The Bio eConference is the result of a 12-state partnership between Iowa State University, Kansas State University, MSU, North Dakota State University, The Ohio State University, Purdue University, South Dakota State University, the University of Minnesota, the University of Missouri, the University of Nebraska, the University of Wisconsin and the University of Wyoming.

#lp#