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Patriot Renewable Fuels hires Leifmark to plan first stage of major cellulosic ethanol project

Inbicon technology to be centerpiece of low-carbon, high-profit platform

ANNAWAN, IL and LEOLA, PA—Gene Griffith, Co-Founder & President of Patriot Renewable Fuels, LLC and Thomas Corle, co-founding partner of Leifmark, LLC today announced that Leifmark has been hired to create a custom Project Definition, the first stage of a plan for co-locating an Inbicon Biomass Refinery on the site of Patriot’s 110 MMgy grain-ethanol plant in Annawan, Illinois.

“Leifmark’s analysis will give us a clear picture of the overall technical and economic factors,” says Griffith. “Their study will provide a sound basis for deciding whether Patriot should go ahead with the engineering phase of the project.”

Paul Kamp, Leifmark co-founding partner in Chicago, says, “Patriot has a history of innovation since its Annawan plant opened in 2008. Adding cellulosic ethanol production is a natural next step.”

At the centerpiece of the technology platform is the Inbicon biomass conversion technology, which Denmark’s DONG Energy began developing in the late 1990s and has demonstrated for over 15,000 hours at its Inbicon Biomass Refinery in Kalundborg, where it typically processes 4.4 tons an hour of wheat straw.

The commercial model in the plans for Annawan will process about 1320 tons per day of corn stover using Inbicon’s patented technology and mixed-sugar (cellulose/hemicellulose) fermentation. Annual production will be 25-30 MMgy of cellulosic ethanol and up to 175,000 tons of high-purity lignin, which has BTU value similar to coal and can provide more than enough base-load power to run the operation without fossil fuels.

“A successful cellulosic project must achieve three major goals,” says Kamp, “First, low-carbon fuels that the U.S. EPA values highest and meet the toughest environmental standards. Second, a commercial rate of return, which will make the project readily financeable and highly profitable. And it must be sustainable long-term.”

Griffith sees societal advantages that support company values. “Besides building Patriot’s future, the project will add jobs in our community, strengthen our nation’s energy security, and help the environment.”

Corle adds, “Grain-ethanol producers have transport and utilities in place, biomass residues in nearby fields, the know-how to operate refineries, and the wisdom to embrace a cellulosic future. They’re the ones who will drive cellulosic ethanol gallons to meet the U.S. Renewable Fuels Standard. We will take this message to policy-makers. Patriot will lead the way.”

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