



Environmental and Rural Development Impacts

*A conference sponsored by
Farm Foundation,
USDA Office of Energy Policy and New Uses
and USDA Economic Research Service*

October 15-16, 2008
Hyatt Regency St. Louis at Union Station
St. Louis, Missouri

Call for Papers

The nation's rapid transition to a bioeconomy has significant implications for agriculture, the food system, rural communities and the global economy. Farm Foundation and USDA are sponsoring a series of conferences to inventory current knowledge, highlight lessons learned to date, identify future possibilities and determine what we need to know for the future. These conferences and the products produced from them will provide government, industry, academic and community leaders with objective information and analysis they can use to make more informed decisions related to the bioeconomy in the next decade.

This third conference will explore environmental and rural development impacts of the bioeconomy. Topics will include biofuels and carbon emissions, land use impacts, water quality and quantity issues, jobs and the bioeconomy, the opportunity of animal waste, public perceptions of the bioeconomy, and capital formation for the bioeconomy. We seek to include research that examines the current generation of biofuels as well as the next generation of biofuels that may be produced from perennial grasses, stover, wood chips and other biomass.

The conference program will feature presentations by industry and government experts and invited academic papers. Of specific interest are reports on research highlighting four topics of significant importance for understanding the bioeconomy:

The lifecycle carbon footprint of biofuels

Biofuels are being promoted as a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, there is considerable controversy about the methodologies for assessment of life cycle emissions, particularly indirect emissions generated due to land use changes. Lifecycle carbon emissions may differ spatially and across different types of biofuel crops. We seek papers that address the methodological issues associated with life cycle analysis, papers that assess the lifecycle carbon emissions of biofuels produced from a variety of technologies, and papers that apply these methods for assessing impacts of various policy proposals.

Water quality, land use and other environmental challenges of the bioeconomy

Increased production of biofuels is raising concerns about water requirements and water quality impacts. The expansion of corn acreage and collection of corn stover for biofuel production has implications for nitrate run off, soil erosion and soil carbon levels. Monocultures of biofuel crops can impact wildlife habitats and biodiversity. Biorefineries are major consumers of water. We seek papers that quantify these environmental effects of biofuel production and the implications of economic behavior under various biofuel production scenarios for water use and quality, soil carbon and other environmental indicators.

Jobs and income in rural communities

Biorefineries create jobs, and jobs produce income streams. And the impacts multiply as this income moves through a local economy. But there is some controversy about the number of jobs created by the biofuels industry, the size of income streams, the multiplier effects and possible negative impacts on other economic activity in communities. We seek papers that work to quantify the economic impacts of the biofuels industry on local and regional economies.

The bioeconomy as a long-term community development strategy

Biofuels have been promoted by some for their potential to stimulate local and regional economic development. We seek papers and case studies that demonstrate the variety of ways that the biofuels can be part of a comprehensive economic development strategy that may also include investments in infrastructure, research, education and job training, and other quality of life factors. It is hypothesized that the ownership structure of the biofuels industry (local ownership versus larger corporate structures), size of plants, and location may influence the overall economic impact of the biofuels industry to a local economy. We seek papers that examine the effects of these factors on the overall impact of the bioeconomy on local and regional economic activity.

Submissions are not limited to economic analysis, but can report on research that examines different facets of these challenges for the bioeconomy. Preference will be given to papers that frame critical issues and provide research-based information on the consequences of different approaches to these challenges. Selected papers will be presented in concurrent sessions.

Submission Guidelines: Papers must be submitted **via e-mail no later than Friday, August 1, 2008**. E-mail should be addressed to Madhu Khanna and sent to bioeconomy@igb.uiuc.edu. **The e-mail body serves as the cover page for the proposal** and must include the name, affiliation, address, phone number and e-mail address of corresponding author, the title of the paper, the subject area (from list above), the name of the attached file containing the proposal and the attachment file type (Word or WordPerfect). **The paper must be attached to the e-mail** as a Word or WordPerfect file and follow the submission format below. Please do not include the authors' names in the attached proposal file. Papers are limited to 15 pages in total length (including the cover page) double spaced on 8 2" x 11" paper with 1-inch margins on all sides, 12 point font. **Authors will receive an automated e-mail confirmation of receipt of their submission.**

Selection and Presentation: Acceptance decisions, based on two reviewer evaluations, will be communicated to authors by **September 3, 2008**. For accepted papers, paper and electronic copies of your final paper must be sent to Madhu Khanna, University of Illinois, 301A Mumford Hall, 1301 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana, IL 61801, with a postmark no later than **September 24, 2008**. Final manuscripts should not exceed 20 pages in total length (including figures, tables and references) and must be double spaced on 8 2" x 11" paper. Authors will be expected to develop a PowerPoint (or equivalent) electronic file to be used when presenting the paper at the conference. Presentations will be limited to 15 minutes. Presentation files must be submitted to the conference editor by **October 1, 2008**.

Publication: Material from all conference papers will provide background for a conference executive summary publication to be developed by Farm Foundation for broad public distribution.

Authors of papers selected for presentation will be given the option of participating in an academic conference proceedings volume. This volume will be edited by Madhu Khanna, published in electronic form and posted to the Farm Foundation web site. However, only papers identified by the reviewers as making a substantial contribution to the literature in this area will be published in the conference proceedings volume.

Questions may be directed to Dr. Steve A. Halbrook (630-571-9393 or steve@farmfoundation.org) or Dr. Madhu Khanna (217-333-5176 or bioeconomy@igb.uiuc.edu)