



News Release

Agricultural Research and
Extension Council of Alberta

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BIOFUELS WORKSHOP VIDEOS AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING

ALBERTA, December 24, 2008 – The Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta (ARECA), in cooperation with local producer-led organizations, delivered a series of workshops this past year designed to demystify the burgeoning biofuels industry.

Each one-day workshop included presentations by people already involved in the production of biofuels as well as government and industry representatives. The experts who spoke included Dr. Bert Farber; Ken Herlineveaux and Judy Bowcott; Morley Kjargaard; Dr. Kurt Klein; Dr. Rex Newkirk; Chuck Penner; and Harald H. Welling.

Prior to and following the workshops, those who attended were surveyed as to their level of knowledge of related issues, their concerns and questions with respect to the industry, general attitudes about biofuels and whether the information received had an impact on their attitudes.

Some overall impressions of participants included the following:

- Most of those who attended a workshop felt that while they were well informed about biofuels, the information presented was still useful. A majority of participants (80 per cent) indicated that they'd like to receive further data about biofuels. Over 65 per cent said they'd prefer to access that data through either a website or newsletter.
- There was high level of consensus that the various levels of government should take the initiative when it came to providing more information, funding additional biofuels research, and providing funding incentives to ensure continued food production, land for wildlife and sustainability of the cattle industry.
- The majority of people found the topics covered of equal interest, but seemed to get the most out of the discussion on alternate sources for biofuels (ie: wood) and how to make biodiesel.

- Attendees thought that biofuels are still good for the environment. They felt advantages about the industry included the potential use of off-grade or waste products and the potential for both profit and self-production. Disadvantages were identified as higher cattle and higher feed prices, negatively impacting the already floundering beef industry.
- Through the survey, 95 per cent of attendees said that they felt the Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta (ARECA) should provide leadership on the burgeoning industry, but wanted ARECA to stay neutral and not engage in advocacy. They would prefer that ARECA's role remain one of providing information, conducting or gathering research, or holding demonstrations and workshops.

The workshop proceedings, the entire survey and a brief video clip are available on the [ARECA website](#) under "Featured Projects".

As of February 1, 2009, a complete set of DVDs encompassing the presentations will be made available through the offices of **Battle River Research Group; Chinook Applied Research Association; Lakeland Forage Association; Lakeland Applied Research Association; Gateway Research Association; North Peace Applied Research Association; Peace Agriculture Research & Demonstration Association; West Central Forage Association; and Peace Country Beef & Forage Association**. Producers interested in borrowing the DVDs should contact the closest participating association (contact information available through www.areca.ab.ca).

Funding for this initiative was made available through the Agriculture & Food Council, which is responsible for delivering Agri-Food Canada's *Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) Program* in Alberta.

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