State and Local Leaders Speak on Importance of Bioproducts at Recent Symposium

Environment and economic benefits top the list of benefits for implementing statewide BioPreferred Program

Lincoln, Nebraska – July 14, 2011 – A number of industry leaders gathered this week in Lincoln for a Bioproducts Symposium hosted by the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB). The symposium served as a way for leaders in the bioproducts industry to present on issues pertaining to the development, use and availability of bioproducts. In attendance were many state and local procurement specialists, city mayors, council members and University of Nebraska extension educators.

State Senator Lydia Brasch was on hand to discuss the details of Legislative Bill 691, which was brought to her by Nebraska Soybean Association (NSA). The bill would require state agencies to give purchasing preference to bio-based products if the products are of equal quality and similarly priced to non bio-based products.

“Implementing a BioPreferred Program in Nebraska would help further promote agriculture and research, the economy, and production of bioproducts,” stated Senator Brasch, who fully expects the bill to be reconsidered once the fiscal note has been removed.

Additional speakers at the event included Greg Anderson, governing board member of the National Biodiesel Board (NBB); Jessica Reidl, BioPreferred Program project manager, Brett Sciotto, CEO of Governing Dynamic, LLC, Adam Short, Associate Product Manager and Sales Manager of Nutek Green and Don Eby, founder of The Clean Environment Company.

Nebraska Has Strong Support for Bioproducts
A main concern among leaders at the state and local levels is whether or not the people of Nebraska will embrace the widespread use of bioproducts. The general use of bioproducts is still relatively low compared to mainstream items on the market, but a recent study has shown the trend is slowly shifting.
Sciotto discussed a recent consumer survey conducted in Nebraska. The survey was focused on the feelings consumers in Nebraska have towards the use and adoption of bioproducts. "The survey concluded that 81 percent of consumers are supportive of state and local governments using bio-based products," says Sciotto. "The environment is set for the state to move forward with LB 691."

**Identifying Acceptable Bioproducts**

A common misconception that was addressed at the symposium was the definition of a bioproduct. According to the USDA, a bioproduct is a "commercial or industrial product composed of biological ingredients, including materials from plants, animals and marine life." Reidl spoke in detail about the BioPreferred program, which is a volunteer labeling system for products that have been tested and meet specific requirements put forth by the USDA. Products that are submitted are tested for certain levels of bioproducts, and if they meet the requirements, the products are then given a distinctive label for easier identification.

Reidl also described the work that the BioPreferred Program has done to create a database of bioproducts on the market. This database makes it easier for state and local agencies to identify and purchase bioproducts.

**What Is Next for Nebraska?**

With the support of NSB, many at the symposium are hopeful for the future of bioproducts in Nebraska. Victor Bohuslavsky, Executive Director of NSB, stated, "We will continue to support education for Senator Brasch and LB 691. It is important to move forward with this bill because the environmental and economic benefits in adopting a BioPreferred Program is clear, and we want Nebraska to be at the forefront of the movement."

All speakers at the symposium urged attendees to start purchasing bio-based products and to aid in spreading the word about bioproducts.

**About Nebraska Soybean Board**

The nine-member Nebraska Soybean Board collects and disburses the Nebraska share of funds generated by the one half of one percent times the net sales price per bushel of soybeans sold. Nebraska soybean checkoff funds are invested in research, education, domestic and foreign markets, including new uses for soybeans and soybean products.

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