

BIOENERGY VISION STATEMENT TASK FORCE MEETING

June 3, 2008

Minutes

The Bioenergy Vision Statement Task Force Meeting was held on June 3, 2008 at 3 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 19, 2008 at 3pm, 223 Plant Biotech Building.

Attendees were as follows:

Task Force Members:

Burt English, Agricultural Economics
David Harper, Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries
Lorna Norwood, Marketing and Communications
Daniel De Le Torre Ugarte, Agricultural Economics
Neil Rhodes, Plant Sciences
Neal Stewart, Plant Sciences
Mark Windham, Entomology and Plant Pathology

Absent:

Caula Beyl, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
Joe Bozell, Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries
Doug Hayes, Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science
Pat Keyser, Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries

Support Staff:

Patty McDaniels, Marketing and Communications
Sam Jackson, Office of Bioenergy Programs
Ann Ryan, Office of Bioenergy Programs

There were no comments nor changes to the minutes from the previous meeting held on May 1, 2008.

The topics of discussion for this meeting included finalizing the Vision and Mission statements for the Bioenergy Program, performing a SWOT Analysis, and engaging in the process others inside and outside the University.

The Task Force's final revision of the Vision and Mission statements as of this meeting are as follows:

Vision:

The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture will be the national and international leader in cellulosic bioenergy and bioproducts research, education and outreach within five years.

Mission:

The mission of the UT Institute of Agriculture Bioenergy Program is to enhance economic and environmental sustainability and reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels and petroleum-based products through research, education, and outreach programs on bioenergy and biobased, non-food energy sources.

The mission will be accomplished through:

- Development and adoption of technology for sustainable and responsible cellulosic resources to become a strategic source of the nation's fuels.
- Excellence in scholarly reputation and visibility among higher education institutions, private sector companies and government entities through research accomplishments that produce:
 - Economically competitive biofuels and bioproducts;
 - Advanced science and technology that results in new products entering U.S. and world markets;
 - Publications in highly respected refereed journals; and
 - Intellectual property worthy of patenting and licensing.
- Programs that foster economic growth, rural community development and sustainable use of natural resources.
- Appropriate, targeted educational programs that will train the future bioenergy workforce.
- Partnerships that leverage resources and build relationships.



It was agreed upon by the Committee that the following four areas should be addressed in our Vision/Mission statement:

- Economic/Rural Development
- National Security
- Reduced use of fossil fuels
- Environment

It was noted by Daniel de la Torre Ugarte that the vision statement should be more inclusive of people not directly working in bioenergy in an attempt to make those people feel more connected to this program. He also feels the Mission statement should clearly communicate that UT will become a national and international leader in this field, and that it should engage people so that they will be vested in this program.

It was noted by Mark Windham that the Vision statement goes out to multiple audiences and our statement should be extremely clear and understandable to the lay person. Several Task Force members stressed the importance of the Vision/Mission statements not alienating anyone. We want all audiences to understand if they want to be involved and have a stake in this process, they are welcome.

There was concern regarding the inconsistency in the fact that the Vision Statement addresses UT's role in bioenergy in becoming the leader both nationally and internationally, but the Mission Statement addresses the State level only. It was decided to change the verbiage of the Mission statement to replace "to enhance the state's economy. . ." with "enhance the economic and environmental sustainability. . ." This discussion led to further discussion regarding "reducing America's dependence on imported fossil fuels and petroleum-based products . . ." It was the concern of the

Committee that by utilizing the word “**America**”, we imply that America is the only country depending on foreign oil which isn’t a true statement. It was also determined that we need to replace “renewable energy” with “bioenergy” in the Mission statement in an attempt to maintain focus on biofuels and not solar energy, wind, etc.

There was much discussion regarding food security and the misconception that planting switchgrass would displace land that could be used to grow food. The majority of the committee feels that although this may be a future concern, the responsibility of the committee is to stay focused on the goal set forth. If this becomes a huge issue, the research program will need to address this. We have a short timeline to develop the technology for biofuels. As we grow, there will be things that will change and need to be addressed.

The question was raised again as to how we obtain feedback and internal buy-in from UTIA. Some suggestions include the possibility of a Bioenergy Research Symposium geared to researchers as well as staff. We could invite quality speakers from ORNL or possibly have a panel of people address UTIA as well as the main campus. It was suggested that Dr. DiPietro send out an invitation. It is also a possibility to invite Lamar Alexander, Zack Wamp, etc. to sit in. There was also discussion about Task Force members presenting the Vision and Mission statements at department meetings to get feedback and engagement from others throughout UTIA.

The Task Force concluded with a discussion of strengths and weaknesses.