

NIFA in the News – Week of October 15, 2012

Curious as to what happens to all the news releases you see in the [NIFA newsroom](#)? Here's the weekly summary of NIFA's mentions in the news media for the week of October 15, 2012.

### **In the News**

**Penn State gets \$10M grant for biofuels research (AP/WFTV-FL/The Republic 10/16).** Penn State University is receiving a five-year, \$10 million federal grant for research into biofuels. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the grant Tuesday. He says it's aimed at developing biomass supply chains for the production of biofuels in the Northeast. Vilsack says the creation of the biofuel system will help improve the prosperity of rural areas and create jobs through public and private sector partnerships. The grants come through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

**Ag Sec. Vilsack Announces Efforts to Spur Job Creation Through Regional Biofuel Production and Research (WGMD Radio News 92.7 10/16).** U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack today announced a five-year, \$10 million grant to Penn State University to lead a public-private effort to develop alternative biofuels to corn-based ethanol. Delaware State is among the eight universities who will be taking part in the research and development work. Penn State will be coordinating how the money gets doled out to the other universities. The grant money is coming from the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and is part of the department's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative. [Link](#)

**\$10M grant will fund research into biofuel-based economic development (Penn State Live 10/16).** The Northeast could help lead the way to a renewable-energy-based economy by utilizing marginal and abandoned land to grow energy crops such as perennial grasses and fast-growing woody plants. That's the goal of a new research and education project led by Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences and supported by a \$10 million grant, announced today (Oct. 16), from the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, a program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The Northeast Woody/Warm-season Biomass Consortium, or NEWBio, will develop perennial feedstock production systems and supply chains for shrub willow -- a short-rotation woody crop -- and the warm-season grasses switchgrass and miscanthus. The project will promote the use of marginal farmland and abandoned lands, such as reclaimed mine sites, so that these crops will not compete for resources with food production. [Link](#)

**Sec. Vilsack Announces Biofuels Grant for Penn State University (WTAE-ABC-PA 10/16).** Penn state university is receiving a five-year grant worth \$10 million for research into biofuels. u.s. agriculture secretary and Pittsburgh native Tom Vilsack made the announcement today and says it's aimed at developing biomass supply chains for the entire northeast. a researcher at Penn state will lead the project coordinating with a number of other organizations and universities. [Link](#)

**USDA Announces 6th Regional Biofuels System (Domestic Fuel 10/16).** The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced a research grant to develop next generation biofuels in the Northeast. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today awarded Pennsylvania State University a five-year research grant valued at roughly \$10 million to develop biomass supply chains for the production of liquid transportation and aviation biofuels in the Northeast. This is the sixth such award made through USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), aimed at developing regional, renewable energy markets, generating rural jobs, and decreasing America's dependence on foreign oil. [Link](#)

**USDA announces sixth grant to develop advanced biofuels (Ethanol Producer Magazine 10/16).** The USDA announced a five-year, \$10 million grant has been awarded to research shrub willow, switchgrass and miscanthus grown on marginal and abandoned lands, such as reclaimed mine sites, in the Northeast. This is the sixth grant awarded through USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, which is working to develop regional renewable energy markets to create jobs and reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil. Five other regional systems were previously formed in the Pacific Northwest, the Northwest, Northern states, Southern states, and the Southeast. "This will basically complete our efforts in every corner of the country as part of our overall effort to promote biofuel, both in terms of automobiles and truck transportation as well as aviation and marine fuel," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack during an Oct. 16 conference call. [Link](#)

**United States Department of Agriculture: USDA Announces Nation's Sixth Regional Biofuels System, Meant to Spur Innovation and Job Creation in the Northeast (4-Traders 10/16).** Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today awarded Pennsylvania State University a five-year research grant valued at roughly \$10 million to develop biomass supply chains for the production of liquid transportation and aviation biofuels in the Northeast. This is the sixth such award made through USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), aimed at developing regional, renewable energy markets, generating rural jobs, and decreasing America's dependence on foreign oil. In September 2011, the Secretary announced five major AFRI grants for the formation of five regional systems in the Pacific Northwest, the Northwest, Northern states, Southern states, and the Southeast. Today's announcement underscores USDA's support for public and private research in building the framework for a competitively-priced, American-made biofuels industry in every major American region. [Link](#)

**Penn State gets \$10M grant for biofuels research (Tribune Democrat 10/16).**

Penn State University is receiving a five-year, \$10 million federal grant for research into biofuels. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the grant Tuesday. He says it's aimed at developing biomass supply chains for the production of biofuels in the Northeast. Vilsack says the creation of the biofuel system will help improve the prosperity of rural areas and create jobs through public and private sector partnerships. The grants come through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

**USDA announces sixth grant to develop advanced biofuels (Biomass Magazine 10/16).** The USDA announced a five-year, \$10 million grant has been awarded to research shrub willow, switchgrass and miscanthus grown on marginal and abandoned lands, such as reclaimed mine sites, in the Northeast. This is the sixth grant awarded through USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, which is working to develop regional renewable energy markets to create jobs and reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil. [Link](#)

**Massive Push to Develop Biomass Feedstocks (Energy Digital 10/16).** As part of its continued effort to drive the commercialization of alternative fuels, Primus Green Energy Inc. an alternative fuel company based in Hillsborough, N.J., has signed on to the Northeast Woody/Warm-season Biomass Consortium (NEWBio) as an industry collaborator, providing technical insight to the group as it develops perennial feedstock production systems and supply chains for biomass feedstocks. Led by Penn State's College of Agricultural Science and supported by a nearly \$10 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, other consortium partners include eight universities based in the Northeast, the USDA's Eastern Regional Research Center, the U.S. Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Idaho National Laboratory. [Link](#)

**USDA Awards \$10 Million Grant To Penn State (Talk Radio News Service 10/16).** Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack announced on Tuesday new funding to promote biofuels as a new source of energy. Pennsylvania State University will be leading the coalition to develop biomass opportunities which will supply chains for the production of liquid transportation and aviation bio fuels in the Northeastern region of the U.S. The university was awarded a five-year grant valued at \$10 million. This is the sixth award given from the USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), aimed to produce rural jobs and reduce America's dependence on foreign oil. [Link](#)

**Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium honored (Delta Farm Press 10/16).** The National Institute of Food and Agriculture, a part of the U.S. Agriculture Department, is recognizing the Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium, on its interstate teamwork. The consortium, based at North Carolina State, consists of researchers and educators from the University of Arkansas, University of Georgia, University of Tennessee, Virginia Polytechnic and Clemson, is to be recognized with the NIFA Partnership Award for Multi-State efforts. The awards ceremony is part of the NIFA Day of Appreciation. [Link](#)

**\$10M Grant will Fund Research into Biofuel-based Economic Development (Gant Daily 10/17).** The Northeast could help lead the way to a renewable-energy-based economy by utilizing marginal and abandoned land to grow energy crops such as perennial grasses and fast-growing woody plants. That's the goal of a new research and education project led by Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences and supported by a \$10 million grant, announced today (Oct. 16), from the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, a program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

**USDA scientists collaborate with global researchers to advance the mapping of the barley genome (Science Codex 10/17).** In a major advance that will unlock the benefits of the mapping of the barley genome--one of the world's most important cereal crops--work conducted and supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in collaboration with researchers around the world has resulted in the most advanced sequencing of the barley genome to date, as reported today in the journal *Nature*. Along with project investigators Timothy Close and Stefano Lonardi at the University of California, Riverside (UCR) and Gary Muehlbauer at the University of Minnesota, supported by grants from USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists Roger Wise and Jesse Poland, together with scientists from 19 other organizations around the world, make up the International Barley Sequencing Consortium (IBSC). [Link](#)

**1.8 M grant to promote healthy snacking (The Observer 10/17).** Many children and teenagers in Union County may soon stop reaching for candy bars when they need a snack and instead choose to eat fruit and granola bars low in sugar and fat. Look for the snacking habits of many local children and teenagers to improve significantly thanks to a new program made possible by a four-year \$1.8 million grant from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The grant was recently received by the Oregon Health and Science University School of Nursing at EOU on behalf of the Union County Fit Kids Coalition. [Link](#)

**U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack discusses local initiatives to advance biofuels industry (WHYY 10/17).** During a visit to Philadelphia this week, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack spoke with NewsWorks Tonight about the Food, Farm and Jobs bill, and a new program to bring biofuel production to the northeast, with a \$10 million research grant to Penn State. [Link](#)

**Step toward mapping of barley genome (Brownfieldagnews.com 10/17).** A big step has been taken toward mapping the barley genome. Barley is the world's fourth largest cereal crop. The USDA's Agricultural Research Service says their researchers and the 19 other scientists who make up the International Barley Sequencing Consortium (IBSC) were able to piece together the order of the barley genome, which was a challenge because of its complexity. [Link](#)

**\$10M Grant Will Fund Research into Biofuel-Based Economic Development**

**(Lab Manager Magazine 10/18).** The Northeast could help lead the way to a renewable-energy-based economy by utilizing marginal and abandoned land to grow energy crops such as perennial grasses and fast-growing woody plants. That's the goal of a new research and education project led by Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences and supported by a \$10 million grant, announced today (Oct. 16), from the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, a program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

**Grant funds Kan. precision agriculture partnership (CBS News 10/18).** Kansas farmers and farmers-in-training will get some help learning to use the latest technology. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture has awarded \$277,000 to Fort Hays State University and Hutchinson Community College to promote so-called precision agriculture. It involves using GPS and satellite technology to map fields and precisely apply chemicals and seed and measure the crop yield. [Link](#)

**Scientists map the barley genome (Agprofessional.com 10/18).** In a major advance that will unlock the benefits of the mapping of the barley genome--one of the world's most important cereal crops--work conducted and supported by the USDA in collaboration with researchers around the world has resulted in the most advanced sequencing of the barley genome to date, as reported in the journal *Nature*. [Link](#)

**UConn Initiates "Connecticut Fitness And Nutrition Clubs In Motion (Hartford Courant 10/19).** A collaboration between the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (Department of Extension) and the Neag School of Education (Department of Kinesiology) resulted in a five-year \$2.5 million Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Competitive Grant. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) project will aim to lower childhood obesity in 9 to 14 year-old children through 4-H afterschool clubs. [Link](#)

**\$2.5 Million Grant To Help K-State Researchers Study Kids' Food Choices (WIBW 10/19).** Dr. Tanda Kidd, associate professor in human nutrition at Kansas State University and K-State Research and Extension nutrition specialist, along a team of researchers want to tackle the problem head on by looking at what kids are eating and why. Dr. Kidd and her team have been awarded a \$2.5 million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture's (NIFA) Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) to investigate 6th to 8th graders' eating habits over a period of 5 years. Researchers will immerse themselves in communities in Kansas, Ohio and South Dakota to look at some of the factors influencing kids' weight. [Link](#)

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