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Iowa City Hosts 2013 Iowa Biomass Crop Workshop

Integrated Crop Management News, Iowa State University

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Iowa City Hosts 2013 Iowa Biomass Crop Workshop

Abstract

A Biomass Crop Production Workshop will look at reasons for the increasing interest in biomass crops for energy in Iowa. The workshop will be held Tuesday, March 19 at the Johnson County Extension Office in Iowa City. Registration opens at 8 a.m., with the program beginning at 8:45 a.m. and concluding at 1 p.m.

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Iowa City Hosts 2013 Iowa Biomass Crop Workshop

A Biomass Crop Production Workshop will look at reasons for the increasing interest in biomass crops for energy in Iowa. The workshop will be held Tuesday, March 19 at the Johnson County Extension Office in Iowa City. Registration opens at 8 a.m., with the program beginning at 8:45 a.m. and concluding at 1 p.m.

This workshop, sponsored by Iowa State University (ISU) Extension and Outreach and partners, is specifically targeted to farmers and land managers wishing to learn more about dedicated energy crops, especially Miscanthus, for heat and power in Iowa. It will also be useful to policy makers, students, educators and the general public seeking to learn more about renewable energy.

Farmers and land managers in the Iowa City area maybe especially interested in the topic because the University of Iowa (UI) has committed to an ambitious goal to procure 40 percent of its energy (electric power, natural gas, coal and biomass) from renewable sources by 2020.

Since 2003, the UI has partnered with Quaker Oats to use oat hulls to produce 8 to 13 percent of annual energy. Expanding to 40 percent renewable energy is a significant challenge that will require multiple renewable energy feedstocks. In addition to evaluating waste wood and invasive species as feedstocks, the UI expects to rely on dedicated energy crops, of which Miscanthus (*Miscanthus × giganteus*) is the highest yielding. The UI has contracted with two area farmers to produce Miscanthus in 2013, with future expansion expected.

Iowa State University has been investigating Miscanthus – a giant, perennial grass new to Iowa, but used for energy in Asia and Europe – and other perennials for use in Iowa farm landscapes. The Biomass Crop Production workshop will feature speakers from UI, Iowa State, Miscanthus planting company New Energy Farms, and Miscanthus farmers from the Iowa City area. Practical information will be presented on the UI biomass project and Miscanthus crop management, including environmental impact and invasive potential. In addition to presentations and panel discussions, there will be opportunity for interaction with speakers and other attendees.

Workshop registration

Pre-registration is \$20 until midnight March 12 and \$30 after that date. Registrations will be accepted the day of the workshop. Registration includes refreshments, lunch and class materials. Students may attend for free but advance registration is appreciated.

Registration can be completed online with a credit card at www.aep.iastate.edu/biomass. Registration forms are available on the website for mail or fax registration. For more information, contact ISU Extension ANR Program Services at (515) 294-6429 or anr@iastate.edu.

This program is sponsored by ISU Extension and Outreach, USDA-NRCS, Iowa National Science Foundation Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) and Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE).

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