University of Iowa Planting Miscanthus May 7, 2014

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Abstract
A 13-acre pilot field of Giant Miscanthus (Miscanthus x giganteus clone IL) will be planted Wednesday, May 7 at a field is just outside of Iowa City (south on Highway 1, 0.5 miles from Menards; map). All interested growers and the general public are invited. The best time to be there is anytime between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Representatives from the University of Iowa (UI), Iowa State University (ISU) and Repreve Renewables, the company planting the field, will be on-hand to answer questions about the UI Biomass Fuel Project and dedicated energy crops.

Keywords
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University of Iowa Planting Miscanthus
May 7, 2014

By Emily Heaton, Department of Agronomy

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In 2013, the UI planted a 16-acre pilot Miscanthus field in Muscatine County. The UI has contracted with Repreve Renewables to supply the rhizomes and plant the 2014 field, which, along with the 2013 field, will used to better understand growing Miscanthus in southeast Iowa, as well as demonstrate planting and harvesting techniques to potential growers. The UI is planning to plant an additional 2,500 acres of Miscanthus by 2016 to produce up to 25,000 tons per year of biomass fuel.

**About Miscanthus**

Miscanthus is large, warm-season, perennial grass used for energy, bedding and building material. It is one of a portfolio of dedicated energy crops suitable for Iowa, and can produce large amounts of renewable energy while providing all the environmental benefits associated with perennial grasses. The crop is sterile and must be planted with rhizomes or small plants ('plugs').
Miscanthus (Miscanthus giganteus) growing on ISU research farm. This perennial grass takes 3 years to mature, lasts 20-30 years, and yields ~10 tons/acre/year. Photo credit: Nicholas Boersma.

As part of the Biomass Fuel Project, ISU is collaborating closely with UI to develop cropping systems and management for the Biomass Fuel Project. To learn more about Miscanthus, visit ISU biomass specialist Dr. Emily Heaton’s webpage to find YouTube videos and ISU Extension and Outreach factsheets, or contact Emily at heaton@iastate.edu.

About the University of Iowa Biomass Fuel Project

The UI has a sustainability goal to procure 40 percent of its energy from renewable sources by 2020. Biomass is cofired (mixed) with coal and burned in boilers, reducing the University's fossil fuel usage. Biomass from dedicated energy crops (miscanthus, switchgrass), timber stand improvement projects, opportunity wood (storm damage, emerald ash borer, etc.), and organic industrial byproducts (oat hulls, paper sludge, etc.) are being developed as part of the renewable fuel portfolio. You can find more information online at http://www.sustainability.uiowa.edu/biomass.

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