



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

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Energy Secretary Chu, Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Announce \$6.3 million for Biofuels Research

Washington, DC – U.S. Department of Energy Secretary Steven Chu and U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced today the joint selection of awards of up to \$6.3 million towards fundamental genomics-enabled research leading to the improved use of plant feedstocks for biofuel production. The seven projects announced today follow the green jobs and renewable energy Rural Tour event hosted last weekend by the two cabinet Secretaries in Virginia. These investments will further the Obama Administration's efforts to broaden the nation's energy portfolio while decreasing our dependence on foreign oil.

"Part of the solution to the energy problem will be home-grown energy crops," Secretary Chu said. "These projects will help us unlock the true potential of advanced biofuels, decrease our dependence on foreign oil, and create new jobs and a thriving biofuels industry in America."

"Helping expand and diversify production of biofuels is an example of the Obama Administration's commitment to developing a sustainable domestic biofuels industry that can help strengthen rural America while decreasing our dependence on foreign oil," said Secretary Vilsack.

These grants will be awarded under a joint DOE-USDA program begun in 2006 that is committed to fundamental research in biomass genomics, providing the scientific foundation to facilitate use of lignocellulosic materials for bioenergy and biofuels. Since lignocellulosic crop plants are less intensive to produce and can grow on poorer quality land, competition with crops grown for food production is avoided.

DOE will provide \$4 million in funding for four projects, while USDA will award \$2.3 million to fund three projects. Initial funding will support research projects for up to three years.

Awards have been selected for:

- USDA-ARS Northern Plains Area (Lincoln, NE), \$1,182,000
- USDA-ARS Western Regional Research Center (Albany, CA), \$1,300,000
- University of Georgia (Athens, GA), \$1,200,000
- University of Georgia (Athens, GA), \$705,000
- Michigan Technological University (Houghton, MI), \$900,000
- University of Florida (Gainesville, FL), \$643,000
- University of Nebraska (Lincoln, NE), \$390,000

Secretary Chu recently posted a video on his [Facebook page](http://www.facebook.com/stevenchu) (<http://www.facebook.com/stevenchu>) and on his YouTube channel discussing the great potential of next generation biofuels.

Read more information on the individual projects and the [DOE-USDA biomass genomics research program](http://genomicsgtl.energy.gov/research/DOEUSDA/index.shtml) (<http://genomicsgtl.energy.gov/research/DOEUSDA/index.shtml>).