

THE WORLD IS SEARCHING FOR NEW ENERGY SOURCES

– CEO OF POET JEFF BROIN DETAILS HIS OUTLOOK ON THE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR FUEL

Due to the increasing recognition of the environmental damage that fossil fuels have done to our planet over the past century, the world is searching for new energy sources. POET is convinced that biofuels are the only available, sustainable replacement for petroleum across the transportation industry.

Since its inception, POET has had a relentless focus on producing biofuels in the most efficient manner possible. This has shown itself in our continued work to decrease energy consumption, reduce water usage, and maximize yield. The result has been an increasingly shrinking environmental footprint that in recent years has been recognized by the US Environmental Protection Agency, notably for our use of cogeneration and landfill gas as a power source in some of our plants.

But we are not satisfied with where we are today. As we move forward, our research and development is focused on three key areas: improving the efficiency of our starch production process, commercializing the production of bioethanol from cellulose, and developing renewable coproducts that can displace products made from petroleum.

We are also increasingly powering our facilities from renewable energy sources. One of our corn ethanol plants can be completely powered by burning wood waste and landfill gas. An anaerobic digester was recently installed at the POET Research Center, which is an integrated cellulosic ethanol pilot facility capable of producing 20,000 gallons of bioethanol per year. As we move forward to integrate commercial-scale cellulosic ethanol production with our existing plants, our goal is to generate most, if not all, of the power at those facilities by renewable sources of energy.

Just how we go about using renewable energy to replace fossil fuels will be key to reaching the goals of the United Nations Framework

Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its COP15 conference in Copenhagen this December. With one very specific task in focus – stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous climate change – I plan to continue to talk with world leaders about the role that bioethanol can play in decreasing greenhouse gas emissions and helping them achieve that goal. That is what POET does, everyday. I will also be joining colleagues from around the world and across the value chain at a roundtable to demonstrate the global potential of biofuels, and how they can and do make a positive difference to each country's climate change agenda.

In the US I think we are all starting to understand the need to live in a more environmentally sustainable manner. However, the solutions that gain the most widespread adoption will be those that ask the least in terms of major sacrifices or lifestyle changes on the part of consumers. That is why ethanol has to be a part of the equation. Compared with gasoline, today's ethanol cuts greenhouse gas emissions by at least half, and its environmental performance is constantly improving – while petroleum's gets worse. Ethanol is here now, can be used in the existing transportation system, and today accounts for nearly 10% of the US's transportation fuel supply. With continued increases in yield and the successful commercialization of cellulosic ethanol, ethanol production can increase substantially, and its use will help us all reach the goal of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. ■



Jeff Broin is the CEO of POET, a leading ethanol producer based in North America.

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