

USDA



Rural Development

Committed to the future of rural communities.

NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENTS \$299,600 TO BOOTHEEL AGRI-ENERGY

U.S. Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson joined Greg Branum, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development, in a Mock Check Ceremony to present a \$299,600 grant to David Herbst, Chairman of Bootheel Agri-Energy. The ceremony took place on Monday, November 6, 2006, at the Sikeston City Hall.

“In Southern Missouri, we have tremendous opportunities and responsibilities to supplement the U.S. energy market with fuel from our fields.

There are so many stable, secure sources of energy at home, it makes me shake my head in wonder that we give in to OPEC's pricing monopoly again and again. American energy independence starts right here in the Bootheel. This is more than a local economic development project; the entire country ought to be very proud of what we are doing here. USDA Rural Development has identified a great way to assist the implementation of a national energy policy that emphasizes on alternative fuels, and our U.S. Senators, Kit Bond and Jim Talent, also share my solid support for this component of a national strategy,” said U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson.

“The central objective of Bootheel Agri-Energy (BAE) is to bring additional revenue streams to participating members and stimulate economic development by constructing and operating a 100-million gallon ethanol facility in Southeast Missouri. The USDA Rural Development Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) funds will assist with necessary working capital for the start up professional expenses to meet the project goals. Some of these will be for legal services, financial planning and operational accounting expenses for contracts, consultants and personnel to move the project forward. The entire BAE Board appreciates the forward thinking of our own Missouri U.S. Senators “Kit” Bond and Jim Talent and U. S Representative Jo Ann Emerson to support



Front row: Ken Westrich , Project Coordinator Jami Geske David Herbst - Chairman, Mayor of Sikeston Mike Marshall, U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson, Charles Hurst Gene Dement, Mike Geske, Bob Hahs, Rural Development State Director Greg Branum, Rural Development Specialist Phyllis Minner.

2nd row: Project Coordinator - Teresa Steiner, Martin Priggel, Douglas Golden , Edward Riley , Joe Schneider , C.D. Stewart, Vice Chairman Von Priggel, Edward Dement, Bill Holmes, Rural Development Area Director Pam Anglin, and Lewis Rone

programs which allow pursuit of renewable fuel projects, plus the help of Greg Branum and the Rural Development team! "We appreciate this government recognition of the needs of rural communities and the importance of a forward-looking energy policy," said David Herbst, Chairman of Bootheel Agri-Energy.

"I am excited to see BAE benefit from the USDA VAPG program," said Branum. "This project will bring significant economic development to the Bootheel region of Southeast Missouri. Projections show that the results of this partnership will include at least 55 direct jobs, a potential for 1550 indirect jobs, and increased local and regional income and tax revenues to support individuals, businesses and communities."

The mission of BAE is to work on behalf of its members toward the development of a value added business in order to provide a source of exponentially increased revenue to these members and to promote economic development in the area of implementation, through the construction and operation of a world-scale, state-of-the-art dry mill ethanol plant in Southeast Missouri.

"Funding value added and renewable energy projects like BAE provides assistance to Missouri agribusinesses, increasing their bottom line, providing jobs, and enhancing America's energy independence," added Branum. "This kind of innovative project mirrors Presidents Bush's energy initiatives and commitment to the future of rural communities."

Branum added , "Appreciation is also extended to U.S. Senators "Kit" Bond and Jim Talent and U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson for supporting USDA Rural Development. They have been strong proponents of providing essential services to rural Missourians."

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo> or by contacting Pam Anglin, Area Director for USDA Rural Development, at the Dexter Area Office, 18450 Ridgeview Lane, Dexter, MO. 63841, or by calling 573-624-5939 (extension 4).

"Committed to the future of rural communities."

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."

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