

We are facing some serious challenges in this country regarding energy consumption, and it seems that the only viable alternative is changing the way we make and use our fuel. Bio-fuels represent an exciting new dimension to agriculture in Alabama. We have an abundance of resources normally associated with alternative fuels such as corn and soybeans, but we also have cellulosic products such as wood and switchgrass. And, in Montgomery, we will soon begin using recycled cooking oil to fuel city and state vehicles.

The Alabama Legislature created the Center of Alternative Fuels in the 2007 Session. The Center, housed in the Department of Agriculture and Industries, shows how important the development of alternative and bio-fuels is to our state. And, with the new law, state taxpayers will have an opportunity to contribute to the Alabama Alternative Fuels Research and Development Fund when they file their 2007 income tax form.

As citizens, one of the most patriotic actions we can take is to develop and use alternative sources of fuel to lessen our dependence on foreign oil. Agriculture must be a big part of the solution. In fact, this could be the biggest revolution for agriculture in this country since farms were mechanized.

For more information visit:

http://www.agi.alabama.gov.alternative_fuels

Ron Sparks
Commissioner

As the new director for the Alabama Field Office, USDA/NASS, I have truly enjoyed getting to know Alabama agriculture. Poultry, cotton, peanuts, and catfish not only make a huge economic impact locally, but make a difference at the national level as well. There is also the potential for Alabama to be a viable participant in the exploration of bio-fuel use. The *Alabama Agricultural Statistics Bulletin* provides a comprehensive statistical reference to these and other agricultural commodities on an annual basis.

The success of this bulletin is due in large part to the many farmers who willingly took time from their busy schedules to participate in our surveys and I thank them for their cooperation.

I also want to thank our telephone and field enumerators who work hard to maintain a positive association with Alabama producers and the office staff who've put together another excellent statistical bulletin.

Bill Weaver
Director



(L-R) Dr. Ernst Cebert, an agronomist with A&M University, Hoover Mayor Tony Petelos, and Commissioner Ron Sparks at the biodiesel facility in Hoover.

