



Press Release

United States leads the path in the commercialization of cellulosic ethanol

Thursday 4 September

Brussels, 4 September – Yesterday, King Willem–Alexander of the Netherlands opened in the U.S.A. a commercial–scale cellulosic ethanol plant constructed by Dutch DSM and U.S.A.–based ethanol producer POET. Better known as Project Liberty it is the first of a number of commercial scale plants due to come on stream in the United States in 2014. Drawing on European investment and technology, and enabled by a supportive policy framework, the United States is now pioneering the commercialization of cellulosic ethanol.

“This is an historical day in the development of cellulosic ethanol as a viable, commercially available alternative to gasoline,” said Feike Sijbesma, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Managing Board of Royal DSM. “It also marks an important step forward in the transition from the fossil to a (bio–) renewable age. At DSM, we believe in the power of innovation and science, and Project LIBERTY is a prime example, offering us a new, sustainable approach to living off the land: the promise of the bio–based economy.”

The contrast between the United States and Europe is however stark. Although the first commercial scale cellulosic ethanol facility in the world was opened in Italy, and a number of companies including Danish DONG, Spanish Abengoa and German Clariant are operating demonstration plants, no commercial scale facilities are being constructed in Europe. Abengoa and DuPont are scheduled to open commercial–scale cellulosic ethanol plants in Kansas and Iowa later this year.

“This is a wake–up call for European policy makers. Whilst the United States is embracing European technology and European companies are choosing to invest in the United States, yet again Europe is falling behind. We have the technology and abundant biomass; all we need is a supportive and stable policy environment, like the Renewable Fuel Standard in the United States, that provides the incentives and stability for European companies to invest in cellulosic ethanol, said Rob Vierhout Secretary–General of ePURE.”

Project Liberty aims at unlocking the potential of cellulosic ethanol. It is using waste from corn harvesting to produce 20 million gallons (77 million liters) of ethanol per year, will deliver GHG reductions of 85–95%, and provide a predicted \$24 billion in economic output over the next 20 years in Iowa.

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The European Renewable Ethanol Association (ePURE) represents the interests of European renewable ethanol producers to the European institutions, industry stakeholders, the media, academia and the general public. Based in Brussels, ePURE represents 53 member companies, with production plants in 16 member states, accounting for 90% of the installed renewable ethanol production capacity in Europe. The organization, established in 2010, promotes the beneficial uses of ethanol throughout Europe.