



## National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **NAFA SUMMIT ENCOURAGES ALFALFA-BASED CELLULOSIC ETHANOL PRODUCTION**

St. Paul, MN – Alfalfa is a crop which is well-positioned to be a leader in the production of cellulosic ethanol, so says a gathering of experts brought together for a renewable fuel summit in Washington, D.C. hosted by the National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance (NAFA). **Bioenergy Systems... Alfalfa, the Sleeping Giant** was held on Wednesday, August 8, in the Russell Senate Office Building in an effort to promote the benefits of alfalfa as a biomass crop for the production of cellulosic ethanol and to develop an action plan to catalyze research activity into bringing cellulosic ethanol production technology to commercialization.

“If we’re serious about achieving a goal of “25 x ‘25” and reducing our dependence on foreign sources of energy, alfalfa needs to be part of the equation,” said NAFA President Beth Nelson. “Alfalfa has distinct advantages over other crops when it comes to cellulosic ethanol production, specifically, an established infrastructure, environmental benefits and potential for co-products that we haven’t even begun to realize.”

An impressive line-up of speakers included: Gerson Santos, Executive Vice President, Abengoa Bioenergy – New Technologies and Chairman, Renewable Fuels Association Cellulose Committee; Michael Russelle, Soil Scientist, USDA Agricultural Research Service; Gene Sandager, Director, National Corn Growers Association; Ghassem Asrar, Deputy Administrator, Natural Resources and Sustainable Agricultural Systems, USDA Agricultural Research Service; John Ferrell, R & D Team Leader, Biomass Program, U.S. Dept. of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy; Anne Simmons, House Ag Committee; Tara Billingsley, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee; and Hans Jung, Research Dairy Scientist, USDA Agricultural Research Service.

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The Summit garnered more than 85 registrants and attracted a broad audience of participants including congressional staffers, administrators from the USDA's Agricultural Research Service and the Department of Energy, and professionals from a wide range of stakeholders including bioenergy companies, alfalfa seed companies, producers and commodity organizations.

The afternoon was spent developing an action plan for NAFA to implement as the demand and production of renewable fuels moves forward. NAFA will use the plan as a road map in an effort to catalyse the use of alfalfa as a candidate crop in the production of cellulosic ethanol, as well as to secure further research funding to examine and address any barriers which exist in doing so.

"This has been a very productive meeting," Nelson added. "I think we're making good progress in changing the way people think about alfalfa."

For those unable to attend the Summit but are interested in the presentations made, NAFA is making a copy of the proceedings available on its website located at [www.alfalfa.org](http://www.alfalfa.org).

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Note: Photos of summit speakers available upon request.