

## **Regional Strategy for Biobased Products in the Mississippi Delta**

A key group of regional leadership organizations has established a comprehensive strategic plan for growing the bioeconomy in 98 counties located along the Mississippi River in Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee. The strategic plan is focused on economic development based on knowledge of existing strengths and weaknesses and a clear vision of the greatest opportunities for producing biobased products in the region.

To access the full report and all supporting information please see:  
<http://www.agbioworks.org/regional.cfm>.

The Regional Strategy for Biobased Products in the Mississippi Delta is being coordinated in Missouri by the Southeast Missouri Economic Development Alliance (SMEDA) and Southeast Missouri WIRED.

This project was initiated by Memphis Bioworks® Foundation, a 501c3 organization, focused on developing the biosciences and biobased products in Memphis, Tennessee, and included participation from companies and organizations across Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee.

Collectively the five states can secure a key leadership role in the emerging multi-billion global bioeconomy by leveraging their assets and attracting technology partners from outside the region. The basis of the bioeconomy is the utilization of renewable biological raw materials – called biomass - that replace petroleum through clean manufacturing processes. Biomass refers to agricultural crops and forestry materials which can effectively harness solar energy and through photosynthesis convert it into a range of useful products based around key plant components such as carbohydrates, fatty acids, proteins, sugars and starches. These can serve as the chemical building blocks to replace petroleum in many products such as biofuels, green chemicals, novel polymers, and biomaterials. The bioeconomy sits at the intersection of established industries such as agriculture, biotechnology and chemistry and merges them to create this new sector which is already valued at over \$140 billion in global sales.

Among other things the comprehensive study concluded:

- Sustainably grown and harvested biomass in the 98-county region can adequately supply an \$8 billion biofuels and biobased products industry without affecting the food and feed supply chain.
- The transformation to a bioeconomy will support more than 25,000 green and supporting jobs during the next 10 years, and more than 50,000 jobs within the next two decades related to bioprocessing and its supply chain in both rural and urban locations.
- The bioeconomy will open up markets for new crops which will increase biodiversity in the region, leading to reduced use of synthetic fertilizers, agricultural chemicals, and water, while increasing options for local farmers.
- The bioeconomy will contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increased air quality, providing sustainable raw materials for local industries, and bolstering national security.

The State of Missouri, SMEDA and Southeast Missouri WIRED are poised to grow this sector of the economy, based on strong leadership and collaboration.

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