



Growing a future of
CLEAN RENEWABLE ENERGY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Genera Energy Partners with TDOT to Plant
Switchgrass along Interstates**

Renewable Energy Crops Could Reduce Maintenance Costs

(Knoxville, TN)- A perennial grass known for producing cellulosic ethanol may now have another use.

Genera Energy LLC, a Knoxville-based renewable energy company, recently planted several plots of switchgrass along interstate corridors in Tennessee in conjunction with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT). The test plots are designed to see if switchgrass can help reduce maintenance costs by reducing the need for mowing and may also have the added benefit of producing biomass for energy and reducing erosion at highway interchanges.

Switchgrass test plot locations include:

- Interstate 81 South in Johnson City at Airport Parkway (Exit 63)
- Interstate 40 in Knoxville at Watt Road (Exit 369)
- Interstate 40/840 Interchange in Dickson County west of Nashville
- Interstate 75 South in Chattanooga at Volkswagen Drive (Exit 9)

“We’re hoping our research will determine the suitability of highway corridors for biomass production. Switchgrass has significant potential to thrive along the interstates and provide TDOT with cost-savings,” said Dr. Sam Jackson, Vice President of Feedstock Operations for Genera Energy. “Switchgrass is a highly productive grass that’s native to Tennessee. It should be a good fit for use along our highway systems and will certainly add to the aesthetics of the highways.”

Switchgrass is one of the primary feedstocks used to produce cellulosic ethanol. Genera Energy currently contracts with 60 farmers in East Tennessee to grow the plant for bioenergy production, specifically cellulosic ethanol, on approximately 6,000 acres. The farms are located within a 50-mile radius of the world’s first demonstration-scale cellulosic ethanol biorefinery in Vonore, Tennessee. The biorefinery opened in late 2009 and will be producing cellulosic ethanol from switchgrass by the end of 2010.

“We currently grow switchgrass in nine East Tennessee counties,” said Dr. Jackson. “Our goal is to help farmers produce healthy switchgrass that can then be turned into energy, such as cellulosic ethanol or pellets for combustion with coal for green power.”

Genera Energy is a for-profit limited liability company wholly owned by the University of Tennessee Research Foundation. Genera provides a vehicle to leverage state and federal funding with private research and development investments, strategic partnerships and collaborations to further the research, economic development, and clean energy objectives of the state and the University of Tennessee. Genera focuses on developing integrated biomass supply chain solutions and strategic partnerships to support the bioenergy industry in Tennessee. Genera's portfolio of public-private clean energy projects includes biomass, biofuels and energy crops. For more information, visit <http://www.generaenergy.net>.

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Photo Courtesy of TDOT: Switchgrass plantings along Interstate 40/840 Interchange in Dickson County west of Nashville mid-June 2010.

