

FEW speakers focus on carbon, new market opportunities

Some of the biggest names in ethanol kicked off the 38th International Fuel Ethanol Conference with discussions on policy, carbon and new market opportunities

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, USA, June 15, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Hundreds gathered for the main session of 38th [International Fuel Ethanol Workshop & Expo](#) Tuesday in Minneapolis, Minnesota, as some of the biggest names in biofuels spoke at the largest ethanol conference in the world.



Tom Bryan, president of conference organizer BBI International, hosted the morning session, telling attendees this year's show is the largest FEW in a decade. "We have nearly 2,000 attendees with us this week, and roughly 500 of them are biofuels producers—plant managers, executives and board members—representing over 90 percent of the production capacity in the country," he said. "It's truly one of the best turnouts we have had in recent history."

Marcos Filgueiras, vice president of business development and marketing at Thermal Kinetics, helped kick off the opening session of the FEW. "I was born and raised in a country where fuel ethanol was part of our daily lives as fuel," he said. "Cars were designed to run on 100 percent ethanol, so my first car was a green Volkswagen Passat. You say, what does that green Volkswagen Passat have to do with this conference? Today, I am proud, after many years in this beautiful and vast country, to represent the company that is the leader and provides technology that enabled my fuel ethanol car."

Also welcoming attendees to Minneapolis, [SAFFiRE Renewables](#) CEO Mark Yancey, and Southwest Airlines Senior Director of Fuel Supply Chain Management Michael AuBuchon, spoke to the audience briefly about their recently formed partnership to explore the production of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) from corn stover-based cellulosic ethanol. The project is receiving

matching funding from the U.S. Department of Energy.

Yancey discussed the unique benefits of the partnership. “[Southwest’s] input from the fuel user perspective will be extremely valuable for our project,” he said.

AuBuchon explained the role SAFFiRE’s technology will play in helping to decarbonize the airline’s operations. “We recognize the critical role SAF plays in decarbonizing the very-hard-to-decarbonize aviation sector,” he said.

“When this project is successful and SAFFiRE’s technology is commercialized, we estimate significant quantities of renewable ethanol can be produced that can be upgraded via the alcohol-to-jet pathway to significant quantities of SAF,” AuBuchon added. “How significant you ask? Well, we estimate that the commercialization of SAFFiRE’s IP could help facilitate the replacement of about 5% of Southwest’s jet fuel with SAF by around the year 2030.”

Following the SAFFiRE announcement, Bryan presented the FEW’s annual awards, the High Octane Award and the Award of Excellence, to two industry veterans. Randall Doyal, the recently retired CEO of Claremont, Minnesota-based Al-Corn Clean Fuels, won the High Octane Award, and John Christianson, founder and director of Minnesota-based Christianson PLLP, received the Award of Excellence (see [Doyal, Christianson recognized at 38th annual FEW](#)).

<https://ethanolproducer.com/articles/19359/doyal-christianson-recognized-at-38th-annual-few>

The 2022 FEW’s policy keynote was presented by Growth Energy CEO Emily Skor, who spoke about a broad array of issues including the industry efforts to secure year-round E15, the recently released renewable volume obligation (RVO) numbers, holding the U.S. EPA to its statutory commitment to uphold the Renewable Fuel Standard, and making sure the RFS is upheld and fairly administered post-2022. Skor also stressed the carbon and cost benefits of ethanol.

“When it comes to competing on carbon, we win,” she said.

“To build on our momentum, we need to remind policy makers that we are more than just an affordable alternative to Russian oil,” Skor added. “It is our role in a low carbon future that will open markets in 2023 and beyond.”

Following Skor’s keynote, a panel of ethanol industry association representatives took the stage for the FEW’s annual Association Roundtable. This year’s panel, moderated by FEW Program Director Tim Portz, was titled “Cementing Ethanol’s Place in Tomorrow’s Low-Carbon, High-Efficiency Transportation Fuels Portfolio,” and included Chris Bailey of Growth Energy, Troy Bredenkamp of the Renewable Fuels Association, and Brian Jennings of the American Coalition for Ethanol.

Todd Becker, president, CEO and director of Green Plains Inc. and Green Plains Partners, gave

the FEW Producer Keynote, sharing the story of the company's ongoing transformation and journey beyond ethanol into high protein, oil, clean sugar, high-purity alcohol, sustainable aviation fuel, carbon capture and sequestration and more.

"Some of you will invest for ethanol yield, some of you will invest in new products, some of you will invest in expansions and some of you will invest to make better products like we've talked about today," Becker said. "No matter what path you choose, I do believe this is the time in history for us to do that. Because we're going to get paid for doing these things and that's the most important thing. And that's by starting to reinvent ourselves."

Closing out the morning session, Summit Agricultural Group CEO Bruce Rastetter, representing the planned Summit Carbon Solutions pipeline project, shared the latest details on the endeavor. The pipeline will capture and permanently store up to 20 million tons per year of carbon dioxide from dozens of ethanol and other industrial facilities across the Midwestern United States. Just recently, the company completed a historic \$1 billion equity raise while simultaneously announcing a joint venture with Minnkota Power Cooperative that will provide Summit access to the largest fully-permitted, permanent carbon dioxide storage (CCS) site in the United States.

"In this last decade, this industry's lost a lot more battles than we've won," Rastetter said. "In this instance of lowering carbon scores, we can win the battles in the future because we're aligned with sustainability like all of us have always believed we've been—but also taking it to the next level to compete very directly with electric vehicles—because certainly in our world they are the competition."

View Full Agenda: <http://www.fuelethanolworkshop.com>

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