

Excerpts from remarks delivered by Dr. Johnny Wynne, dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, at the college's Biofuels Field Day

September 27, 2007

Williamsdale Farm and Agricultural Extension and Research Facility

“We plan to use this farm for that very purpose, to do research to identify feedstocks that can be grown, harvested, stored and processed all here in North Carolina. This farm is also to be part of an infrastructure and part of North Carolina's Strategic Plan for Biofuels Leadership.”

“Now the goal of the plan that was developed with input from more than 75 people across the state was by the year 2017, we will have ten percent of our liquid fuels sold in North Carolina from biofuels grown and processed within the state. And I can tell you that's a very ambitious and optimistic goal since we only have a few small facilities in the state at present.”

“The Strategic Plan for North Carolina has nine strategies, including developing a Biofuels Center for North Carolina. A non-profit corporation has been formed and the center has been established and will be located in Oxford, North Carolina, on the NCDA-owned research station there, the Oxford Tobacco Station. It'll be known as the North Carolina Biofuels Campus. The legislature gave us five million dollars to establish and begin that center.”

“So this farm is included in that strategic plan, and this year one and a half million dollars was secured to begin developing the infrastructure of this center. That money was secured by a group led by Senator Albertson, and we really do appreciate his support and his efforts to promote biofuels in North Carolina.”

“A group of our faculty from the College of Engineering, the College of Natural Resources and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences have secured funding from the GoldenLEAF Foundation to develop a pilot facility at our Lake Wheeler Road facility, and that center is being planned and will soon be built.”

“What we would hope to do is to use this farm as a demonstration of what a farm would do when you grown an energy crop, and then take that material to the pilot facility and determine how efficient the process would be. That would be part of the research that's going on here.”

“I think the time has come for biofuels. They're good for the economy, they're good for the environment, and they're good for our national security. We're going to do all we can in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, working in collaboration with many partners, to make sure that we're players as we move into a new economy where energy comes from bio-based products rather than from petroleum-based products.”