

For Immediate Release

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CFDC Executive Director Doug Durante Tells State Legislators to Hold the Line on the RFS

-Maintaining the RFS and Access to Market Key for High Level Ethanol Blends

Washington D.C. January 13, 2012: CFDC Executive Director Doug Durante spoke at the Annual Agriculture Chairs Summit in Washington, D.C. this week and told the group that the demand for advanced biofuels that would be produced in response to the RFS was as important to American Agriculture as the first 15 billion gallons of corn ethanol has been. In addition, the states can play a key role in helping biofuels gain access to the market so that motorists have a choice of fuels.

The Agriculture Chairs Summit is a gathering of state legislative Agriculture Committee Chairs from 48 states and Eight Canadian provinces. In addressing the outlook for energy, Durante told the group that maintaining the federal Renewable Fuel Standard represented a tremendous opportunity for the states and that American agriculture is likely to be the key supplier of advanced biofuels that will be needed over the next decade to meet the requirements of the program. "Conventional, corn based ethanol has always been seen as a bridge to advanced and cellulosic biofuels. The easiest, most efficient way to develop these fuels is to build on the successes of the ethanol industry to date." Durante told the group that ag wastes, specialty crops, and other ag-based feedstocks offer tremendous possibilities for biofuel production as we move beyond corn feedstocks. That can only happen, he said, if the RFS remain in place.

"With ethanol at somewhat of a crossroads in terms of the tax exemption expiring and new sources of biofuels being required, it is not so much the end of one era as it is the beginning of another. The states are going to have to assume more of a leadership role in this era of a smaller federal government but the states also reap the benefits of employment, lower fuel costs, and improved environment," he said. "Biofuels can replace harmful components of gasoline and address a range of negative health impacts associated with petroleum use, particularly by supplying clean octane."

The key to developing the next generation of biofuels according to Durante is to solidify demand, which the RFS does. It creates investor confidence which in turn accelerates technology development. The third leg of the stool is getting the fuels to market through flex fuel pumps and vehicles. "With a certainty of demand we will see more flex fuel vehicles and more investment in refueling infrastructure. The circle is complete when technology developers and investors see a stable and growing market."

Durante also asked state legislators to support any measure to make the transition to biofuels smoother, including elimination of any barriers such as canopy laws that allow petroleum companies to ban biofuel pumps under their canopy, and unfair labeling or other discriminatory practices.

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