

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **USDA Satellite Features Feed**

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**Contact: USDA-TV (202) 720-6445 or (202) 720-3319**

#### **FEATURE – EXHIBIT DISPLAYS PLANTS FOR FUEL**

**INTRO:** It's not just corn and soybeans that can be turned into biofuel. An exhibit at the National Arboretum in Washington D-C aims to educate visitors about the wide assortment of power plants. The U-S-D-A's Bob Ellison has more. (1:38)

**A DISPLAY OF POWER PLANTS AT THE U-S NATIONAL ARBORETUM IN WASHINGTON D-C IS SHOWCASING THE MANY PLANTS THAT CAN BE TURNED INTO BIOFUEL. THE PROJECT'S DESIGNER SAYS THE GOAL IS TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE VARIETY OF SUCH PLANTS ...AND SOME ARE SURPRISING.**

Scott Aker, Gardens Unit Leader at the U.S. National Arboretum: We have corn and soybeans, of course. We have some tropical plants like castor bean, jatropha, cuphea. We have some things that you wouldn't think of like mustard. Mustard has seeds that contain a large content of oil and although the seeds are tiny they produce very prolifically and you can press the oil from them and use that as a source to manufacture biodiesel. Miscanthus. It's an Asian grass. It grows phenomenally tall and doesn't need good soil. Actually can also store carbon in the soil.

**AKER SAYS HE HAS BEEN SURPRISED AT THE NUMBER OF VISITORS TO THE POWER PLANTS EXHIBIT SINCE IT'S NOT AS COLORFUL AS THE REST OF THE ARBORETUM.**

Aker: I've been amazed at how many people really are fascinated by the plants and stopping to read every sign. You get some people who are fascinated by the whole algae thing. And others who think, oh sunflowers are the best one because they'll beautify the landscape as well as a source of oil. It's interesting to watch families discuss it and parents teach their children about the plants and people discover that plants can have more than one use.

Bob Ellison, USDA (STAND UP): The Power Plants exhibit is scheduled to be open through the Fall of this year, however officials are hoping to keep it around longer. At the U-S National Arboretum in Washington D-C, I'm Bob Ellison for the U-S Department of Agriculture.

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