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# INDIAN RIVER Press Journal

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## INEOS BIOENERGY

### Federal official gets look at project

■ U.S. Dept. of  
Agriculture chief  
Tom Vilsack  
reaffirms support



Secretary of  
Agriculture  
Tom Vilsack  
was in  
the area  
Thursday.

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INDIAN RIVER COUNTY — U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack visited the Indian River BioEnergy Center construction site Thursday and announced the agency's conditional commitment for a \$75 million loan guarantee is in the final stages of approval.

"It's my understanding, and I am keeping my fingers crossed, is that early next week the loan papers will be finalized and it will become a loan guarantee," Vilsack said. "Obviously, it creates a comfort level among those who are lending money to the enterprise."

INEOS Bio CEO Peter Williams and other executives connected to the project held a private briefing with Vilsack when he arrived at the construction site Thursday afternoon. A tour of the physical construction site was canceled because of rain.

"Everything is on schedule," Williams said. "But I don't want to underestimate the skill, expertise and capabilities it takes to build a project like this."

In December 2009, the U.S. Department of Energy selected INEOS Bio to receive a \$50 million grant. Just one month later, INEOS Bio announced it had received a conditional commitment for a \$75 million loan guarantee from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to assist in the construction of the facility as part of its Biorefinery Assistance Program. The company also received a \$2.5 million grant from Florida.

Construction on about 16 percent of the nation's first waste-derived

## INEOS from 1A

bio-ethanol facility in Vero Beach has been completed. About 100 construction workers are currently employed at the facility and by October, another 100 construction workers are expected to be hired, said David King, president of INEOS New Planet BioEnergy.

"We'll be mechanically complete by April 2012 and operational by the second half of 2012," King said. "Obviously, we're very excited that the secretary is here. It shows the level of commitment the USDA and DOE (Department of Energy) has in the project."

The facility will employ 53 permanent workers once fully operational.

AMEC, an international engineering and project management company, is building the local plant. Vero Beach-based South Bay Builders worked on site clearing for AMEC.

The facility is a joint venture between United Kingdom-based INEOS Bio and New Plant Energy. That company's officers live in California, Illinois and Vero Beach. The project had its groundbreaking at the site, southwest of 74th Avenue Southwest and Oslo Road, in February.

Once fully operational, INEOS will be one of Indian River County's top three taxpayers after Disney's Vero Beach Resort and Florida Power & Light Co., local officials have previously said.

"I am excited that progression is moving along so well," said Helene Caseltine, economic development director of Indian River County Chamber of Commerce.

In the past, business leaders have said the economic impact of the company's \$130 million capital investment in Indian River County will influence job creation, hotels, restaurants and municipal taxes in the county.

"To see this come into fruition is great, for not only Indian River County, but the entire Treasure Coast," said Indian River County Commissioner Joe Flescher.

Martin County Commission Chair Ed Ciampi was at the event to show his support for regional cooperation and economic development. "I am very happy to celebrate an Indian River success."

Current plans are for the center to consume 150,000 tons annually of waste materials from landfills to produce 8 million gallons of fuel-grade ethanol and 6 megawatts of electric power using the company's state-of-the-art INEOS Bio technology, a patented anaerobic fermentation process in which naturally occurring bacteria convert gases derived directly from biomass into ethanol. That's enough to power 1,400 homes in the county.

Unlike other technologies that rely on sources like corn, the INEOS Bio process can produce ethanol and renewable energy from construction and municipal solid waste, forestry and agricultural waste.

Vilsack also announced the USDA and DOE have awarded 10 grants totaling \$12.2 million to spur research into improving the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of growing biofuel and bioenergy crops. About \$1 million of that will go to the University of Florida.

See INEOS, 5A