



**AgEcon** SEARCH

RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURAL & APPLIED ECONOMICS

*The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library*

**This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.**

**Help ensure our sustainability.**

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search

<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu>

[aesearch@umn.edu](mailto:aesearch@umn.edu)

*Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.*

*No endorsement of AgEcon Search or its fundraising activities by the author(s) of the following work or their employer(s) is intended or implied.*

# Growing a Future of Clean Renewable Energy



*Growing Demand for Biomass ...*

## Putting It All Together: The Tennessee Biomass Innovation Park

2011 USDA Ag Outlook Forum  
Washington, DC  
February 25, 2011

---

**Kelly Tiller, Ph.D.**

*President & CEO*

Genera Energy LLC  
2450 E.J. Chapman Drive  
Knoxville, TN 37996  
865.974.8258  
ktiller@generaenergy.net

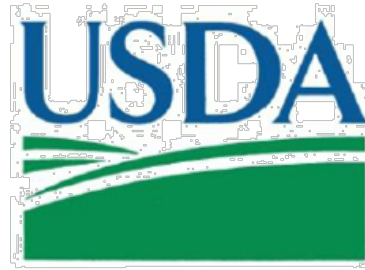
*Associate Professor*

University of Tennessee  
Center for Renewable Carbon  
Knoxville, TN 37996-4570  
865.946.1130  
ktiller@tennessee.edu



# RFS2 Requires Aggressive Buildout ...

USDA Biofuels Strategic Production Report  
June 23, 2010



## A USDA Regional Roadmap to Meeting the Biofuels Goals of the Renewable Fuels Standard by 2022

### Advanced Biofuel Production from New Capacity (billion gallons)

Region	% of Total Advanced Volume	Advanced biofuels		Total Advanced	Total Advanced
		Ethanol	Biodiesel	Volume	RFS2 Basis (1)
Southeast (2)	49.8	10.45	0.01	10.46	10.47
Central East (3)	43.3	8.83	0.26	9.09	9.22
Northeast (4)	2.0	0.42	0.01	0.42	0.43
Northwest (5)	4.6	0.79	0.18	0.96	1.05
West (6)	<.3	0.06	0.00	0.06	0.06
<b>United States</b>		<b>20.55</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>21.00</b>	<b>21.23</b>

# A Southeast Target ...

USDA Biofuels Strategic Production Report  
June 23, 2010



## A USDA Regional Roadmap to Meeting the Biofuels Goals of the Renewable Fuels Standard by 2022

### Southeast

**Potential Production Capacity.** This region could produce 10.5 billion gallons of advanced biofuels per year, at 263 biorefineries producing 40 million gallons by year, costing \$320 million per biorefinery. This will take an **\$83.8 billion cumulative investment, to build the 263 biorefineries** with an average capacity of 40 million gallons. USDA estimated that a significant amount of volume, up to 50%, of the advanced biofuels, could come from this region because it has the **most robust growing season in the United States** that supports the **highest gallons-per-acre crops of all biofuels crops**. One advanced fuel biorefinery is expected to open in August of 2010 in Louisiana, with expected production of 75 million gallons.

**Land Use.** In this region there is an acreage base of 83.4 million acres of cropland and cropland pasture and 182.8 million acres of forest land. To produce the biofuels necessary from this region, an advanced biofuel production of 10.5 billion gallons from **9.5 million acres, 11.4% of the available cropland and cropland pasture acreage base, would be required for fuel use.**

# *Biomass: The Common Denominator*



# Tailoring Biomass Supply Chain Solutions



## Biochemical Biofuels & Products

- Achieving carbohydrate structure for specific conversion processes
- Blending, if at all, within species for a commodity market like wheat



## Thermochemical Biofuels & Heat/Power

- Achieving ash, moisture & rheological property specs
- Blending to produce a commodity market like corn or coal



## Petroleum Refinery Markets

- Achieving energy density & feedstock stability
- Blending to produce a stabilized liquid “bio-crude” for a commodity market like petroleum crude

**Biomass Selection & Pre-Processing**

While one size  
of feedstock may fit  
all downstream conversion uses

...

It doesn't mean that one  
size/type/ source/ spec  
is necessarily the most  
efficient or cost effective  
for all downstream conversion uses

# Feedstock Characteristics



## Perennial Energy Crops

- Multi-year production decision
- High up-front establishment costs
- Slow yield ramp after establishment
- Minimal annual production risk post-establishment
- Moderate/high yield



## Annual Energy Crops

- Annual production decision
- Full yield harvested in first crop cycle
- Higher annual production risk
- May be part of multi-year rotations
- High yield potential



## Ag Residues

- Secondary value stream
- Annual quantity fluctuations
- Higher annual crop yield (production) risk
- Low annual yield potential



## Forest Residues

- Secondary value stream
- Quantity limited by primary products
- Potentially high collection cost
- Low annual yield potential

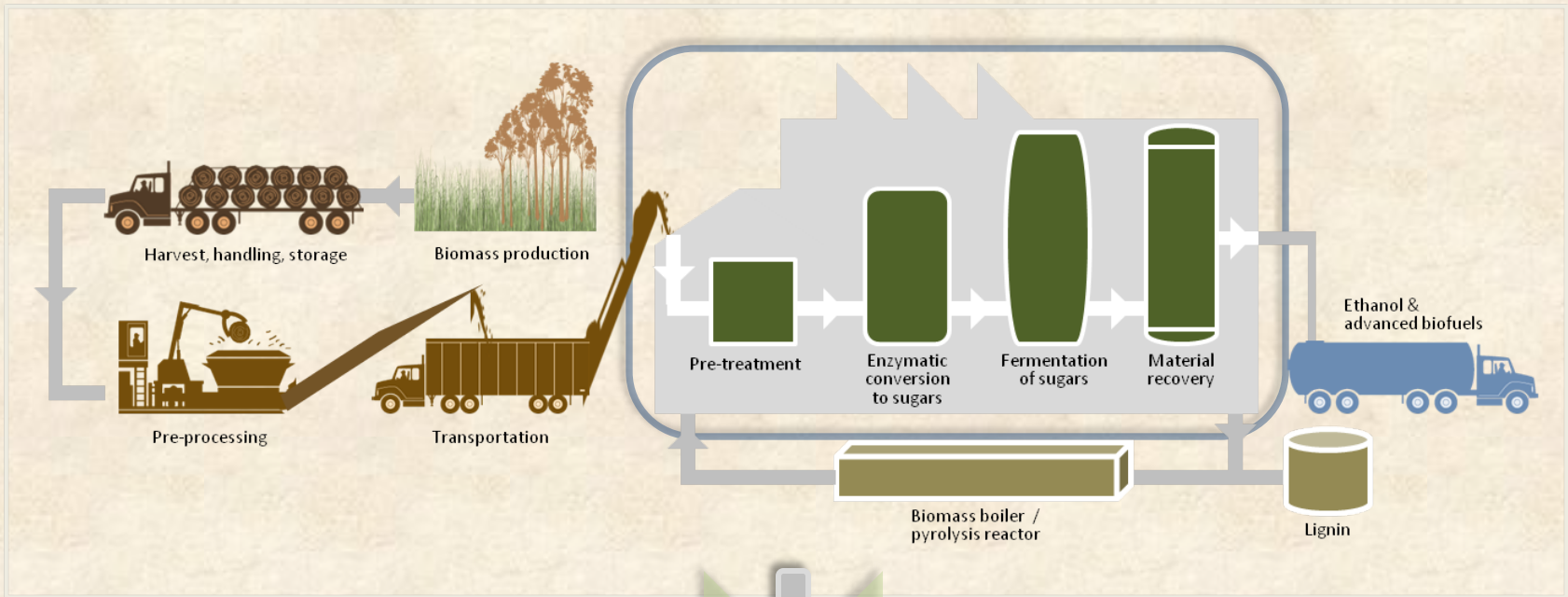


## Short Rotation Woody Crops

- Multi-year production decision
- High up-front establishment costs
- Slow yield ramp after establishment
- Moderate yield potential

← Time Horizon, Risk, Capital Investment, Downstream Processing →

# Integrated Industry Value Chain





# Tennessee's Comprehensive Approach



## Energy Crop Supply Chain

*Demonstrate the establishment of a dedicated biomass energy crop supply chain with farmer*

 AgResearch  Extension



## Biofuels, Bioproducts R&D

*Establish premier RD&D capabilities and capacity in biofuels and bioproducts*



## Commercialization

*Develop a viable, sustainable, long-term path to commercialization of cellulosic biofuels in Tennessee*



**\$70.5 Million**  
State Commitment

## Cellulosic Ethanol Biorefinery

*Demonstrate the pre-commercial production of ethanol from switchgrass*



# Switchgrass as an Energy Crop

- Warm season, native, perennial grass
- Well suited to the Southeast
  - Currently, ~6-10 tons/acre in TN
  - Potential for 12+ tons/acre
- Tolerates poor soils, flooding, drought
- Low input use
  - No irrigation, 60 #/ac N, no P & K, no pesticides or fungicides, minimal herbicides
- 1-2 year establishment
  - Weed control critical in establishment
- Works with existing infrastructure
- Noninvasive, may be removed, improves soil quality
- UT research focus for 20+ years

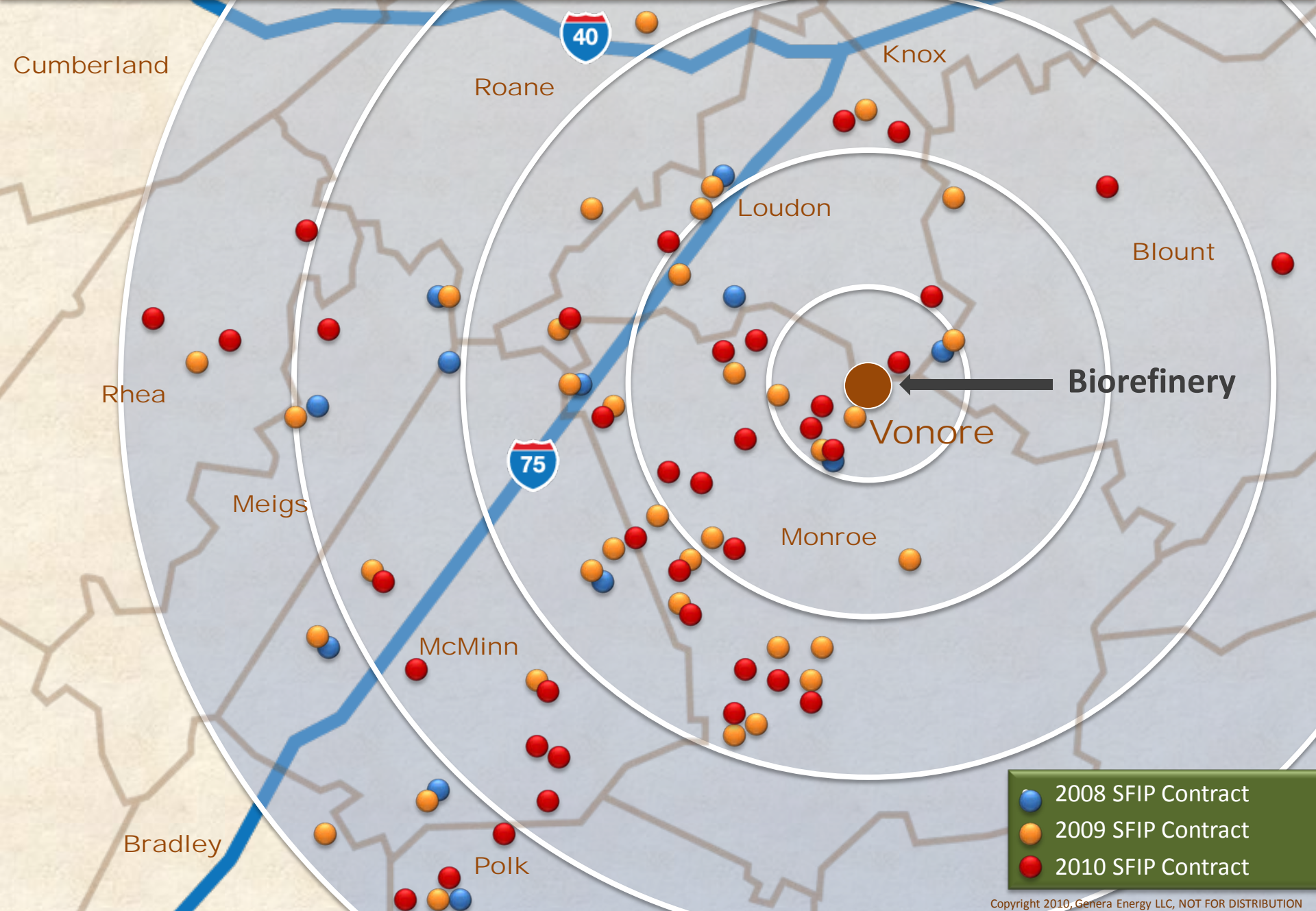


# Tennessee Switchgrass Experience

- Since 2008, contracting with local farmers to produce >5,000 acres of switchgrass
  - 1,000 acres improved varieties
- One annual harvest after first killing frost
  - In TN, November-February
- Begin harvest first year
- Averaging about 8 tons/ac by 3<sup>rd</sup> year
  - Harvesting ~2 tons in year 1
  - ~5 tons in year 2
  - ~8 tons year 3 and beyond
- Builds soil carbon

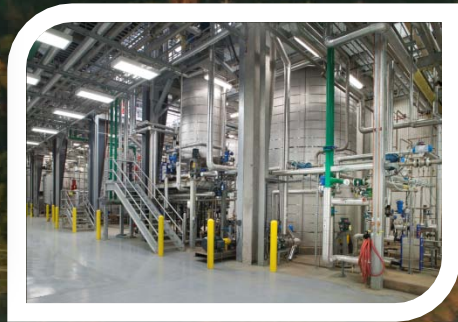
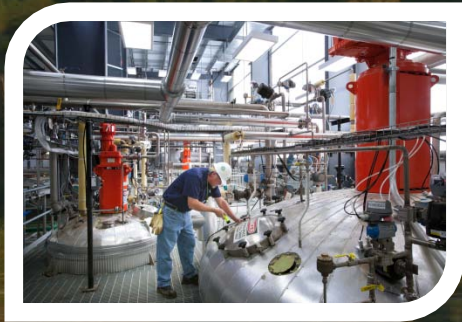


# Switchgrass Contract Farms



- 2008 SFIP Contract
- 2009 SFIP Contract
- 2010 SFIP Contract

# Cellulosic Ethanol Biorefinery



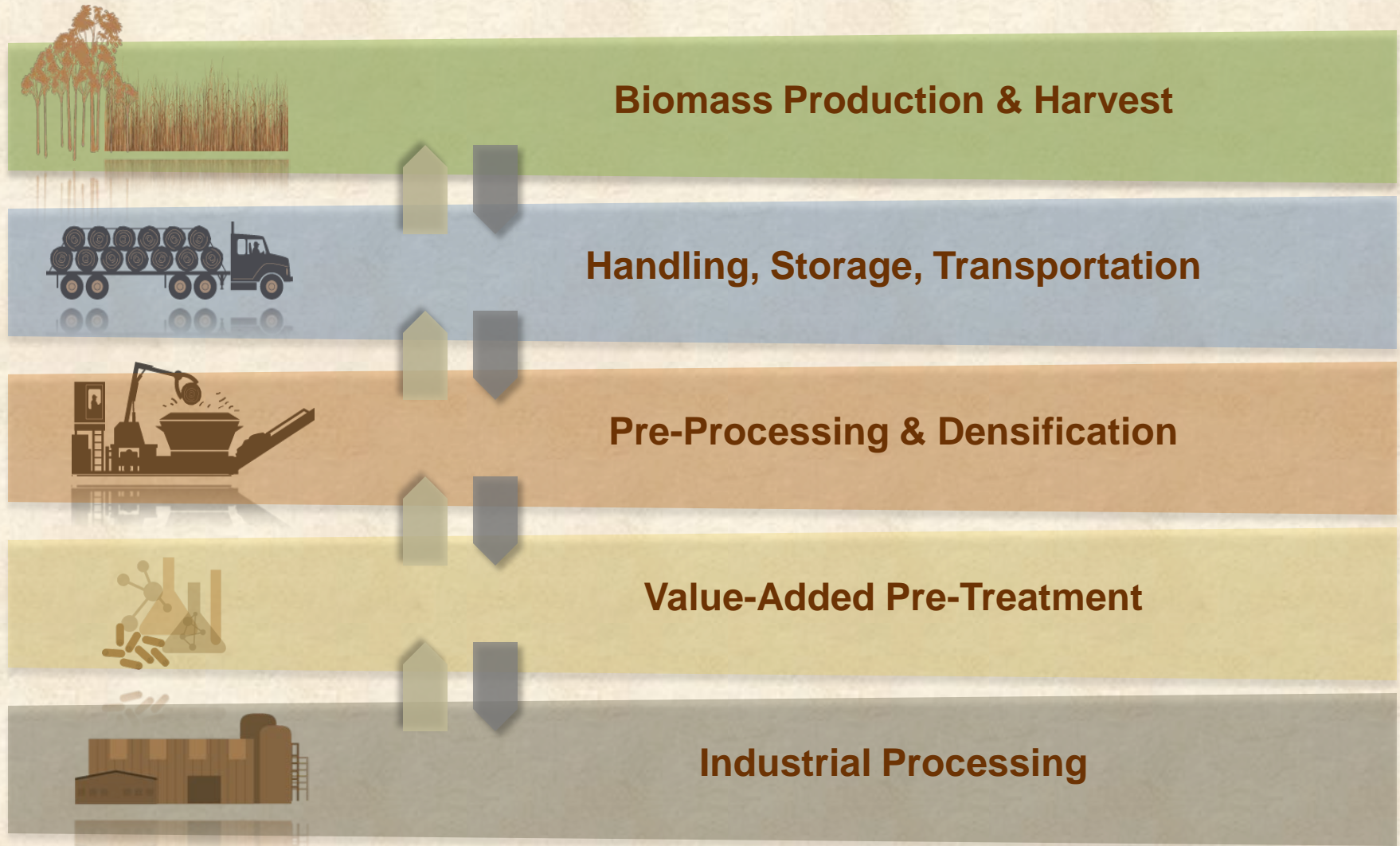
- Vonore, Tennessee: Niles Ferry Industrial Park, Monroe County, 32 acre site
- 250,000 GPY demo plant and Process Development Unit (PDU) pilot plant
- Collaboration between Genera Energy and DuPont Danisco (DDCE)
- Optimized as precursor to commercial facility
- Multiple feedstocks: cob, stover, switchgrass
- Started operations December 2009
- Long-term operation as an RD&D facility



# *Biomass Handling Today...*



# *Integrated Biomass Supply Chain*



# Tennessee Biomass Innovation Park

- World-class RD&D campus
- Integrates entire biomass supply chain
  - Harvest, handling, storage, densification, logistics
  - Pre-processing
  - High throughput screening and analysis
  - Agronomics, plant genetics, production
  - Intermediate processing and conversion
- Multiple feedstocks
- Site for \$5M DOE-funded high tonnage bulk handling demonstration
- Processing operational by summer 2011
- Strategic partnership opportunities
- Template for regional biomass depots



*Conceptual Rendering: July 2010*

# Biomass Innovation Park Timeline

2010

- Phase I (receiving, storage) to be completed by the end of 2010

2011

- Phases II & III (processing and DOE-funded high-tonnage switchgrass bulk handling system to be completed by Q2 2011

2012

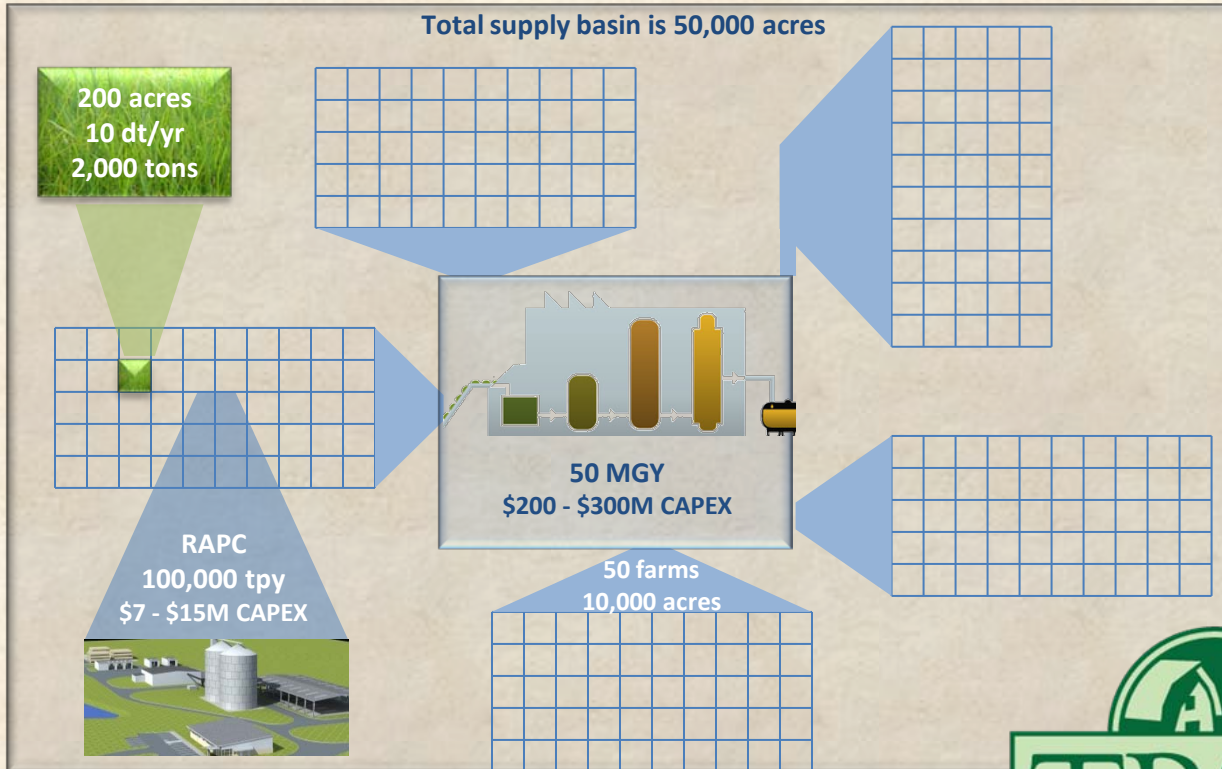
- Working with switchgrass-to-hydrogen technology partner to demonstrate pre-commercial scale unit for power generation
- Potential to develop/demonstrate integration of novel pretreatment

2013

- Seeking grant funding (with UT) to add biomass characterization and analytical laboratories
- Potential to expand footprint to demonstrate gasification, pyrolysis, other conversion technologies or feedstocks



# RAPC – Regional Aggregation & Processing Cooperatives



Hub & spoke supply system (RAPC) for supplying, aggregating, storing, processing, marketing biomass is a natural fit for a value-added farmer processing cooperative



# Challenges to Industry Buildout

- Feedstock supply risk to biorefinery
  - Real or perceived
- Availability of, access to financing
  - Conversion facility
  - Biomass supply
- Policy uncertainty
- Maintaining momentum



# Biomass Supply Chain Structure Drivers

- Required length for supply agreements
  - Matching conversion facility time horizon with crop cycles
  - Perennial crops
  - 20 years?
- Technology treadmill
  - Technology improvement curves
- Managing cash flow
  - Particularly before plant start-up
- Quality control



*Points to end-to-end solutions across entire value chain*



# Tennessee Leading by Example



## Genera Energy LLC

2450 E.J. Chapman Drive  
UT Business Incubator Bldg.  
Suite 216  
Knoxville, TN 37996

865.974.8258 (Office)  
865.974.8301 (Fax)

[www.GeneraEnergy.net](http://www.GeneraEnergy.net)



## Center for Renewable Carbon

University of Tennessee  
Institute of Agriculture  
2506 Jacob Drive  
Knoxville, TN 37996-4570

865.946.1130 (Office)  
865.946.1109 (Fax)

[www.UTBioenergy.org](http://www.UTBioenergy.org)