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World Biofuel Leaders React to Food Summit Resolution

Ottawa, ON: Leaders from the Canadian Renewable Fuels Association (CRFA), the European Bioethanol Fuel Association (eBio), and the Renewable Fuels Association today welcomed the thoughtful approach world leaders took in assessing biofuels' role in the current world food crisis. The following is their joint statement:

“We welcome today’s UN FAO proposal to undertake further study of biofuels in agriculture. We are confident it will underscore the valuable contribution biofuels can make to ease the energy and agriculture challenges confronting all nations.

“Faced with record high oil prices and a variety of other challenges to the ready and equitable supply of food to all peoples, it is now time to move toward sustainable solutions. Our industry recognizes that the production of biofuels provides both opportunities and challenges. We are eager to play our full part in securing a comprehensive, coordinated and, most effective strategy to ensuring both food and energy security around the world.

“Our industries have long recognized the importance of growing crops for both food and fuel and the need to improve sustainability. The biofuels industry and many governments are investing in the development of new methods and technologies to convert wood chips, farm waste, switch grass, municipal waste and other cellulosic materials into biofuel. The very same industry leaders who pioneered the first generation of biofuels produced from sugar cane and grains are leading investment and development of these exciting second generation processes.

“It is reassuring that leaders of the World Food Summit also understand the detrimental impact of high oil prices on the cost of producing and transporting food. Of particular note was the statement by Henrietta H. Fore, administrator of the United States Agency for International Development who pointed out that transportation costs now consume fifty per cent of its food budget.

“The growing recognition that increased use of biofuels is helping world economies address the dire impacts of record oil prices by reducing oil consumption over a million barrels of oil a day and by lessening global warming emissions is also welcome. But the industry believes that even more can be achieved.

“Moving forward, we hope that the leaders of the G8 summit meeting in Japan next month will seriously consider the World Food Summit’s measured approach to biofuels and agree on the continued need to advance the world’s biofuels industry

“Working together with farmers, governments and international aid agencies, the renewable fuels sector is eager to explore ways to help meet the major challenges that confront people in both the developed and developing world, including food production and distribution, and the development of a less costly and more eco-friendly alternative to petroleum.”

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