



Checking in with CenUSA

Sustainable Production and Distribution of Bioenergy for the Central US

CenUSA Bioenergy is a multidisciplinary project funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture-National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA Initiative Competitive Grant No. 2011-68005-30411). CenUSA's goal is to research the production and use of perennial grasses on marginal lands for use as alternative biofuels and bioproducts. More information is available at www.cenusa.iastate.edu.

Scott Rempe, Sr. Project Engineer at Vermeer Corps., spoke in May 2019 about his work and involvement on the CenUSA Advisory Board with CenUSA Communications Intern Tyler Worsham.¹ In the discussion, Rempe emphasized the importance of harvesting logistics and commercial viability in order for biofeedstocks to be successful in the market. Learn more about Scott Rempe at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/scott-rempe-3a740210/>.

How and why did you join the CenUSA advisory board?

"I believe we were asked to participate because of previous involvement with some other USDA and DOE (Department of Energy) research projects."

Could you briefly describe some of those other projects?

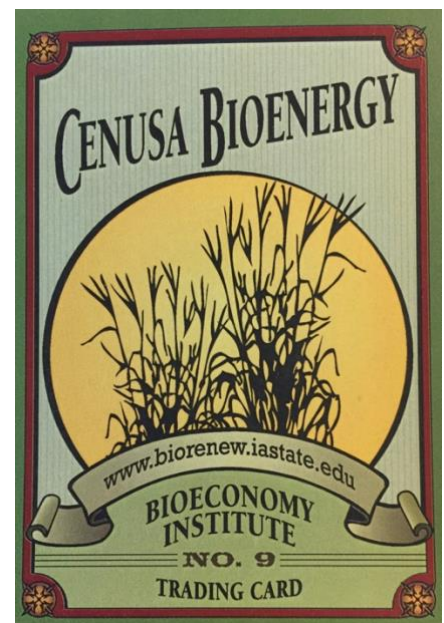
"These other projects were related to biomass harvesting equipment."

How has your professional background and advisory experience informed what you have done with CenUSA?

"My background is in design and development of hay equipment, balers and mowers, so I guess I relied on that experience to consider different aspects of harvesting."

Could you go into a little more detail on your professional background? What did you do before joining the CenUSA advisory board?

"I was responsible for the round baler design for several years at Vermeer. I'm also currently involved with reviewing technologies as a Patent Agent at Vermeer."



CenUSA Bioenergy Trading Card.
Photo: Bob Mills, Iowa State Bioeconomy Institute

¹ All of the words and ideas expressed in this interview fairly and accurately represent the speaker. Some quotes may be paraphrased for brevity and clarity. The opinions expressed in herein do not necessarily reflect those of Iowa State University, USDA-NIFA, Purdue University, Ohio State University, USDA-ARS, the University of Minnesota, the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, the University of Vermont, or the University of Wisconsin.

What were some of the most important inputs that you were personally able to provide to the CenUSA leadership team?

“I think it was the practical input on what the appropriate commercialization goals for the project should be.”

Allow me to rephrase that. What were you able to bring to the table that was unique to your own experience?

“I was focusing primarily on the harvesting considerations.”

How was the advisory board able as a whole to exert influence on the direction of the project?

“I think that we gave a lot of good guidance from a commercialization perspective. If you just look at research alone, you can focus on things that aren’t very important for commercialization, so we were able to bring some commercialization considerations to the table.”

What do you think was the most important contribution that the advisory board made to the project? Considering everything they did, what was the most important?

“It really was providing incentive to focus on something real and deliverable, something more than just the research. Maybe we got the ball moving forward a little faster than we would have otherwise.”

What do you hope will come of the CenUSA project?

“Hopefully, there will be some business to come out of it or some business opportunity for some existing company.”

How do you think that will happen? What would it take for that to occur?

“At one time, I was hopeful that the project would actually demonstrate the complete process of growing crop, harvesting it, processing it and turning it into some kind of specific product on some smaller scale.”



Read our White Paper
https://cenusa.iastate.edu/files/cenusa_2019_075.pdf

Learn more about CenUSA at www.cenusa.iastate.edu

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