



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.

David Stock, CenUSA Advisory Board member and owner of Stock Seed Farms in Murdock, Nebraska spoke about his work and involvement with CenUSA in the areas of feedstock development and sustainable feedstock production systems with CenUSA Communications Tyler Worsham in June 2019.¹ Stock stressed the vital role that those involved in commercialization and production played in shaping the direction of the project and helping it achieving its goals. Learn more about David Stock at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/david-stock-26646624/>

How and why did you join the CenUSA advisory board?

"That's a good question. I think I was asked by the USDA-ARS (Agricultural Research Center) leaders at the University of Nebraska. I think it was Ken Vogel who asked me to join. I already knew several of the university people from different states who were going to be working on the project."

Could you describe your professional background?

"I am the owner of a native grass and wildflower production and marketing company, I gained my education through the University of Nebraska's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and I started my professional career in 1972, so I've been doing it here in eastern Nebraska since then."

Have you advised for any other research projects, and if so, what did you do?

"We have research going on in our operation all the time. We're close enough to University of Nebraska, between the university and their research farms, so we have a lot of research that's taking place in our operation. I've been involved in a lot of research projects on my own,



"I'm thinking that my long experience working with this material for all of these years, knowing what works, what doesn't work and what we need to make it work were probably my greatest contributions." *David Stock*

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.

and I've been helping students in cooperation with other projects."

How did your background and experience inform how you handled the CenUSA advisory board?

"I had experience on the production side. "I had experience on the production side. As you've found out, this project has a lot of moving parts to it, and one of those parts was the production side of the biomass itself. We're talking about a product that I've been handling throughout all of my professional career. I'm thinking that my long experience working with this material for all of these years, knowing what works, what doesn't work and what we need to make it work were probably my greatest contributions."

How did the project challenge and broaden your professional knowledge and skill set?

"I found it very interesting to visit with the other advisors and with the other aspects of this whole project. It was very comprehensive. That's what



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

was very interesting to me. The team leaders thought it through enough to see that a lot of things had to come together to make this successful for a future using biomass as a fuel. It was very educational for me to see all of the different challenges in all of the different areas that I had never considered before then. I thought that was very enlightening."

What specific project objectives do you think directly benefited from your knowledge and experience?

"I would think that the production side benefitted, as well as the adaptability of the future producers given that I have worked with farmers all of my life. I know the kind of challenges they face and what it takes for them to succeed. I'd say I have a lot of experience with all of that, so that's where I probably contributed the most."

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

"I think that there are several areas in which the advisory board was able to bring up situations from their own personal experience that needed to be addressed by the actual research team as the project went along. I think we also brought in more of the commercial side. The people who were involved in the commercial side of producing the biomass and people like ourselves who are actually growing the biomass for the seed production were able to exert the most influence on the direction of the whole project."

If you could distill it down to one thing, what was the most important contribution that the advisory board made? Is there a particular example of something that was essential to the

way the project turned out in a way that it wouldn't have had the advisory board not existed to advise the project?

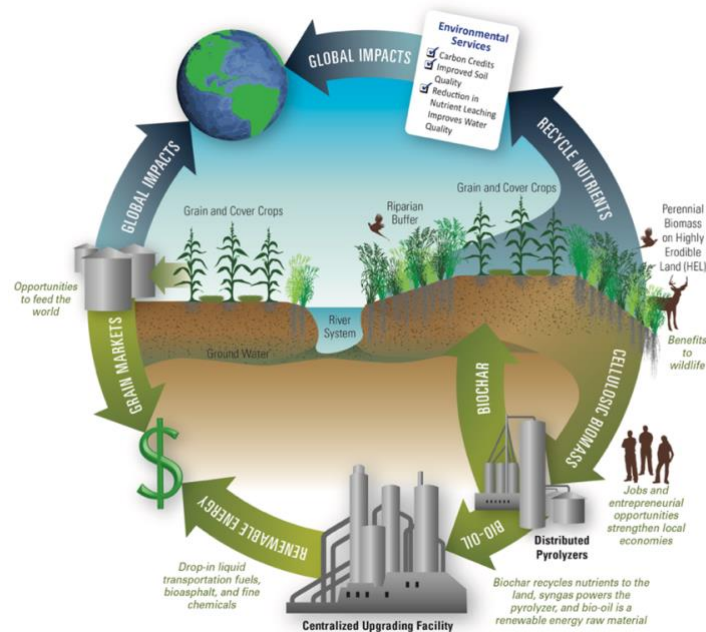
"It's not necessarily in the area in which I was involved, but I think the advisers who were on the commercial side of the end-product were probably the ones to contribute the most to the whole project. I think that those on the production and breeding side understood, but I think that maybe the biggest challenges of the final product were probably in the areas with the most input and influence in that there's more than one product that can come out of this biomass. Take the biochar and some of these other bioproducts, for example. I guess that's the only way that I can see what the advisory board was able to contribute from my perspective."

What do you think will come out of CenUSA?

"Well, I would hope that when the day comes when we really need to use biomass for renewable fuel in this country, this research will be a base platform for moving us toward a feasible economic product."

How might you take your experience with CenUSA and apply it in the future?

"I think it (CenUSA) has probably opened my eyes to different areas that I haven't thought of before that need to be addressed. I've been raising biomass all by myself for my entire life. Again, that's for seed, not the dry product, so that part I understand. What I probably didn't understand as much was the challenges that are faced by the people who are actually processing that product to turn it into an economical fuel."



CenUSA Bioenergy Vision

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

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