

American Corn Growers Foundation

1730 M Street, NW, Suite 911, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 835-0023, E-Mail: www.acgf.org

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Contact: Dan McGuire (402) 770-5237
Gale Lush (308) 478-5562

AMERICAN CORN GROWERS CO-SPONSOR WINDPOWER 2006 IN PITTSBURGH, PA

Renewable Energy, Soaring Cost of Corn Production and U. S. Farm Policy Are Key ACGF Messages

PITTSBURGH, June 2, 2006---The American Corn Growers Foundation (ACGF) and the American Corn Growers Association (ACGA), through their *Wealth From The Wind (WFTW)* program, are major sponsors of WINDPOWER 2006 June 4-7 in Pittsburgh, PA. WINDPOWER 2006 is expected to be the largest wind energy conference and trade show ever held in North America with as many as forty-five hundred to five thousand participating in the activities.

“ACGF and ACGA have sponsored this American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) event since 2002 and are the lead farm group sponsor of WINDPOWER 2006,” said Dan McGuire, CEO of the ACGF. “Wind power grows in importance every day as part of America’s future sustainable and renewable electricity generation mix. We commend AWEA for its renewable energy work and we salute the U. S. Department of Energy and National Renewable Energy Laboratory for their Wind Powering America program and for its successful agricultural outreach to the rural sector.”

The ACGF sponsorship of WINDPOWER 2006 is made possible in part by a W. K. Kellogg Foundation grant. Additional ACGF *WFTW* outreach work is funded by The Energy Foundation and the U.S. Department of Energy and National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) Wind Powering America (WPA) program.

Gale Lush, ACGF Chairman from Wilcox, NE said, "soaring energy cost is one reason that farmers need wind energy. Our farm bought 22,500 gallons of diesel fuel for irrigation in 2001 at \$.40 per gallon, for \$9,000. In 2006, 22,500 gallons at \$2.40 per gallon, is costing us \$54,000. Anyone can see why the full cost of corn production is over \$3.00 per bushel. Renewable energy, combined with a much improved farm policy is urgently needed for rural America.”

Lush added, “today’s ‘export-oriented’ U. S. farm policy delivered only 1.814 billion bushels of corn exports last year, seriously missing, by 1 billion bushels, the 2.8 billion bushel projection its ‘Freedom to Farm’ advocates made! Farm gate corn prices have been disastrous as a result and USDA projects corn prices to average only \$1.95 per bushel in the current 2005/2006 marketing year. USDA projects prices to only go up slightly in the 2006/2007 marketing year that begins on September 1. The difference between \$3.00/bushel and \$1.95 has to come from somewhere. That’s where farm program payments come in, helping mitigate the low farm-gate commodity prices that actually subsidize big, corporate-controlled agribusiness. Farmer-owned wind projects can be a new income stream for farmers and the rural sector. Renewable energy standards and net metering help encourage farmers to convert to electric irrigation wells. Wind turbines can help generate that electricity while saving precious water resources. Unlike fossil fuel or nuclear power plants wind turbines need no water for cooling. Wind power takes demand off of fossil fuels and some of the upward pressure off of energy prices. It is critical that farm organizations and their leaders, as well as the local, state and federal government help get new wind projects up and running in rural America as a top priority for this country.”

“Wind energy works for rural America! Whether the target is twenty-five percent of our nation’s energy from wind and other renewable sources by 2025 or twenty-percent by 2020 U. S. political, farm and rural leaders, together with advocates at all levels, must drive state and federal policies to meet the target. Approximately six percent of the continental United States has the potential for wind turbines with the potential to provide up to twenty percent of America’s electricity. Pursuing an aggressive renewable energy policy agenda has everything to do with America’s national, economic and energy security. It is a top priority for the American Corn Growers Foundation. Our Nation cannot afford to miss this renewable energy target like it did the farm policy export target,” emphasized McGuire, who also serves on the Wind Energy Works! Coalition steering committee and the NREL WPA rural outreach committee.