

POST CARBON INSTITUTE PARTICIPATES IN USDA ORGANIC FARM STUDY

(Sebastopol, CA) Post Carbon Institute is proud to announce its collaboration with Kentucky State University in a new 4-year long USDA-funded study of the sustainability of small Kentucky organic farms growing food and biofuels. Dr. Michael Bomford, Principal Investigator in KSU's Organic/Sustainable Vegetable Production program, will manage this research project.

"I want to thank Julian Darley, president of Post Carbon Institute, for inspiring me to put this program together," said Bomford. "Last spring, Darley told me about the Institute's work on small scale organic farming through its Energy Farms Demonstration Network. After talking things over with him, I sent in a proposal called *Small organic farms growing food and biofuel crops: Effects of scale on sustainability*. After a rigorous peer review process, the USDA approved our grant this fall."

Bomford's project has four major objectives:

- Compare sustainability (land, labor, and energy efficiency) of three small organic farming systems (biointensive, market garden, and small farm) producing crops that could be used for human food or biofuel feedstock.
- Compare sustainability of corn, sweet sorghum, and sweet potato food and biofuel feedstock crops for Kentucky's small farmers.
- Determine market price thresholds at which feedstock production becomes more profitable than food production for each system.
- Compare resource-use efficiency of research plots to that of working organic farms operating at each of the scales studied.

Funding for this project for fiscal year 2008 comes to \$119,430. Total funding for the four years of the project will amount to more than \$450,000.

"We are very pleased to be participating with Dr. Bomford on this important study of the critical role that small organic farmers can play in supplying wholesome food and producing energy crops at the same time," said Post Carbon Institute President Julian Darley. "Locally-grown food and locally-produced energy can play a major role in reducing the agricultural use of oil and the associated production of global warming gases."

As part of the collaboration, Post Carbon will be collecting data from similar demonstration farms in Willits, California, Rogue River, Oregon, and Sebastopol, California, and will post will post short audio, video, and written material generated by this project to the Post-Carbon Institute's outreach site, Global Public Media (<http://globalpublicmedia.com>).

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