

National Algae Association Opens Door To Collaboration

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NAA Invites Congressional Algae Caucus, Department of Energy, Department of Defense, Department of The Navy and US Department of Agriculture to its Commercial Algae Cultivation, Harvesting, Extraction Technologies and Networking Workshop

"Commercial algae production will not only produce quantities of algae for use in fuels, nutraceuticals, pharmaceuticals, feeds, and food, but it will create desperately needed new employment opportunities in algae farming and bio-manufacturing industry," according to National Algae Association Executive Director Barry Cohen.

With that in mind, The National Algae Association has invited all of the members of the recently formed Congressional Algae Caucus, along with representatives from the US Departments of Defense, Energy, the Navy and Agriculture to learn how to commercialize algae production, which is what NAA promotes. NAA supports collaborative efforts between commercially-minded researchers, commercial algae producers and private industry in the scale-up of the algae production industry, and welcomes the members of our government to participate in the dialogue. NAA believes it will take a lot more than a few select algae producers to support the fuel needs of the US armed forces, along with the demands being created by algae's nutraceutical, cosmetics, feed and food uses. It envisions hundreds of outdoor commercial algae farms and indoor algae biomanufacturing facilities springing-up all over the world at strategic locations using low-cost proven scalable algae technologies.

"So far, this vision is being realized more in other countries than our own," according to Cohen. "Foreign countries have been moving faster in deployment of commercial algae farms and indoor algae bio-manufacturing facilities for nutraceuticals, cosmetics, feeds, food and renewable fuels, in large part following the National Algal Biofuels Technology Roadmap released by the U.S. Department of Energy in 2010. The U.S., on the other hand, has continued to fund more research, at the expense of the failure to accomplish the deployment part of the original mission," Cohen continued. "Commercial algae production is active in Australia, Europe, Israel, Saudi Arabia, China, New Zealand, Mexico, Central America, Canada and other countries throughout the world. More and more NAA finds itself expanding internationally.

Due to confidentiality and non-disclosure issues, university researchers whose projects have been funded by DoE grants cannot reveal whether any of their algae technologies have or can scale outside the lab. Follow-up with leaders of the DoE Biomass Technologies Office, formerly the Biomass Program ,have had disappointing results. "By the time they figure it out, the DoE will have supported another research project that will most likely make the last one obsolete. And it's gone on and on this way for decades."

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