FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, JULY 11, 2006

CONTACT: JIM BYRUM
(517) 336-0223

Michigan's First Bio-Economy Summit set for September

The Michigan Bio-Economy Consortium brings together commercial/industrial, renewable fuels and biotechnology interests to learn about new opportunities with the Bio-Economy

EAST LANSING – The **Michigan Bio-Economy Consortium** announced today that it will host the first Michigan Bio-Economy Summit in Lansing from Sept. 20 through Sept. 21, at the Lansing Center in downtown Lansing. The Summit will bring together top state and national leaders in the fields of biotechnology, renewable fuels, methane production and commercial and industrial enterprises.

"The Bio-Economy holds tremendous potential for many different sectors of the economy," said **Jim Byrum**, President of the Consortium. "From ethanol, a bio-based fuel made from corn and other agricultural biomass, and biodiesel produced from soybean oil or similar oils blended with diesel fuel, to methane production from a waste stream, to opportunities to produce plastics and other manufacturing components from agricultural crops, there is tremendous excitement about the potential for the new 'Bio-Economy.'"

"By bringing all these researchers and policy leaders together, those attending will be able to learn about the latest developments in technology, how these developments may impact the economics and processes related to using bio-based materials and even new ideas for renewable fuels," added Byrum. "This truly represents a new private/public partnership to enhance and maximize the impact of these opportunities for the future."

The summit features such experts as Dr. **Kris Berglund**, with DNP Technologies, an entrepreneur who holds several bio-based patents, along with Dr. **Bruce Dale**, an internationally recognized Michigan State University scientist with tremendous expertise in the area of ethanol production. These and other scientists and researchers will explain their work and how it can impact energy and manufacturing technology. Others will be on hand to explain state and federal policies that can help businesses take advantage of these new discoveries.

"The Bio-Economy also holds tremendous potential for jump starting Michigan's economy. The Summit will allow developers, investors and researchers to learn about the full potential of this exciting new field," said Byrum. "Through the Summit, we hope to forge new partnerships and explore new opportunities with bio-based renewable fuels and industrial materials produced from crops that we grow right here in Michigan."

Another focus of the Summit will be biotechnology, and the promise of new developments that will further enhance these opportunities. Representatives of major biotechnology companies will explain their research priorities and pending developments. Much of this new technology will help improve the efficiency of ethanol and biodiesel production, as well as new commercial and industrial ventures.

Many believe that the real opportunity for the Bio-Economy is based on using crops to produce raw materials for manufacturing. From paint to plastics and car parts to glass, crops grown by Michigan farmers will certainly be in your future.

Some companies are already ahead of this curve. A joint venture between DuPont and Cargill produces fibers for carpet from biomass materials, and even plastic bags and cups are being made from corn-based materials.

"We want to find the best ways to take what's grown in our fields and bring new, renewable products to our factories, markets and fuel tanks in the safest, most efficient, profitable, beneficial and environmentally friendly way," Byrum said. "By bringing experts from all these fields to one Summit, we can all learn more about the full potential of the Bio-Economy."

Byrum said Michigan is already well on the way to taking the lead in the Bio-Economy with researchers from Michigan State University providing new ideas, technology and processes, a dynamic biofuels industry, and leadership from the private sector with Monsanto and DuPont already having two of the largest seed production and processing facilities in North America located right here in Michigan.

Michigan's agricultural and biotechnology sectors currently account for more than $60 billion in economic output and 1 million jobs annually. New ventures, many related to the Bio-Economy, especially new facilities to produce renewable fuels promise to create $1 billion in additional revenue, and create up to 23,000 more jobs a year.

Ethanol production alone has the potential to generate an additional $400 million in annual revenue within the next few months. This past spring General Motors announced a joint effort with Meijer and CleanFUEL USA to build 20 new E85 stations across Michigan. E85 vehicles can run on a blend of 15 percent gasoline and 85 percent ethanol.

"Michigan is a very diverse state in terms of the number of agricultural crops produced here," said Byrum. "We have the expertise and ability to handle different crops, and maintain quality and integrity. These factors bode well as Michigan looks toward the bio-economy and using its crops as raw materials for new fuels, new products and new industries."

Sponsors of the Michigan Bio-Economy Summit include Broin, the Ethanol Promotion and Information Council, the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan, Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee, Michigan Farm Bureau and the Michigan Agri-Business Association.

Additional information on the Summit is available by calling 517/336-0223, or at the following web site - http://www.miagbiz.org/index.aspx?mid=44491&mtype=1.