

## **Farmers Remain Guardians of Ethanol Industry Locally-owned Ethanol Plants Form Guardian Energy**

(September 25, 2009) Janesville, MN – Farmers and locally-owned ethanol facilities are the foundation upon which America’s ethanol industry has been built. Today, six such facilities reaffirmed that importance by purchasing the previously idled VeraSun ethanol facility in Janesville, Minnesota.

Guardian Energy– a joint venture between ethanol plants in Little Falls, Benson, Claremont, and Winthrop, Minnesota as well as Mason City, Iowa and Minden, Nebraska – has closed on the purchase of the 100 million gallon per year ethanol plant in Janesville.

“Drawing on the experience of its member plants, Guardian Energy is rapidly working to bring the facility on line this fall,” said interim CEO and Board President Randall Doyal. “We are actively recruiting and interviewing candidates from across the region to fill more than 45 new jobs. We will work closely with local farmers to create a new, value-added market for their corn, and well as with other local suppliers who are already at work completing the plant, putting the finishing touches on the plant site, and bringing in supplies necessary to operate the facility.” Doyal also serves as CEO of Al-Corn Clean Fuel.

“As locally-owned and operated facilities, we are proud to continue the tradition of local ownership and excited about the economic opportunities this plant will bring to Janesville and the entire Southern Minnesota community,” said Ben Brown, CEO of Heartland Corn Products and Secretary of Guardian’s Board.

Specifically, Guardian Energy LLC is the cooperative effort of 6 midwestern farmer owned ethanol plants. These plants believe the economic benefits of producing ethanol should stay in the local communities and that has been key to the success of each of the member plants involved in Guardian Energy. Guardian Energy negotiated with the banks holding the Janesville facility, and their negotiations led to the successful close and transfer of ownership to Guardian Energy on September 23, 2009.

“We believe strongly in the local ownership model of ethanol production,” said Guardian Board member and CEO of Central Minnesota Ethanol Kerry Nixon. “Knowing your investors personally and having a relationship with the communities in which we operate puts us in a good position to weather the economic storms we have seen of late. We are committed to making Guardian Energy a successful enterprise, not just for its investors but for the community of Janesville as well.”

“America’s farmers and rural communities have long been the backbone of America’s drive toward a renewable energy future,” said Renewable Fuels Association President Bob Dinneen. “The creation of Guardian Energy underscores once again that the future of American energy must run through Main Street, not just Wall Street. Locally-owned ethanol production provides the kind of value-added, economic opportunities that few industries can match. The RFA is proud to welcome Guardian Energy to the ranks of America’s ethanol producers.”

The pending start up of this once-idled facility continues the trend of increasing profitability in the ethanol industry. Currently, the industry is capable of producing 11.5 billion gallons of ethanol a year and well on its way to meeting the targets of the Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS).

The six facilities comprising Guardian Energy are Al-Corn Clean Fuel, Central Minnesota Ethanol, Chippewa Valley Ethanol Company, Golden Grain Energy, Heartland Corn Products, and KAPPA Ethanol.