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### **Study eyes Mississippi Delta's share of \$140 million bioeconomy**

**August 27, 2009 (Jackson, Mississippi)** – The Mississippi Technology Alliance (MTA) and the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) are pleased to announce the conclusion of a five-state study that examined how established industries such as agriculture, biotechnology and chemistry can merge to create a new bioeconomy that is already valued at more than \$140 billion in global sales.

The "Regional Strategy for Biobased Products in the Mississippi Delta," examined potential for agriculture and forestry revitalization through the development of new markets in 98 Delta counties. Initiated by the Memphis Bioworks® Foundation, companies and organizations across Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee participated in the study.

"Throughout history, circumstances have aligned to offer some places unique economic opportunities. Our needs for biobased products, the resources of the Mississippi Delta and a changing global economy present just such an opportunity. It's ours to capture" said Dr. Randy Goldsmith, president and CEO, of MTA. The basis of the bioeconomy is using renewable biomass such as crop, forestry and animal-based materials to supplement petroleum in products such as fuels, polymers and industrial and household chemicals.

The comprehensive study found that embracing a bioeconomy in the Delta region will support more than 25,000 green jobs during the next 10 years and more than 50,000 jobs by 2030. The study shows that the region could sustain an \$8 billion biofuels and bioproducts industry without affecting the food and feed supply chains, while increasing air quality, supporting local industries, and bolstering national energy security.

"There are many opportunities available to Mississippi farmers, landowners and businesses in the development and production of energy from biomass," said Gray Swoope, executive director MDA. "We at the Mississippi Development Authority are pleased to have been part of this study, and now that it is complete, we look forward to working with our economic development partners around the state to implement these recommendations."

The 28 Mississippi counties included in the study are positioned to grow this sector of the economy with support from MTA, MDA and the stakeholders who contributed to this study including Kengro Corporation, Delta Council Development Department, Delta Economic Development Center, Mississippi Biomass & Renewable Energy Council and Mississippi Delta Developers Association. In addition to this, significant biomass related research is on-going at several state universities.

“We are excited to participate with Mississippi Technology Alliance and Mississippi Development Authority to access new opportunities for Mississippi, while providing a regional approach that builds strong collaborations,” said Steve Bares, Ph.D., president and executive director of the Memphis Bioworks Foundation.

For more information concerning the study and new economic opportunities in Mississippi contact: Sumesh Arora, director of Strategic Biomass Solutions, Mississippi Technology Alliance (601)960-3659, [sarora@technologyalliance.ms](mailto:sarora@technologyalliance.ms)

### **About:**

#### **Mississippi Technology Alliance**

The Mississippi Technology Alliance is a non-profit organization with the mission to drive innovation and technology-based economic development for the State of Mississippi. The goal for the Strategic Biomass Solutions is to help commercialize renewable energy technologies by connecting energy entrepreneurs, investors and economic developers. To learn more, visit [www.mta.ms/biomass](http://www.mta.ms/biomass).

#### **Mississippi Development Authority**

The Mississippi Development Authority is the State of Mississippi’s lead economic and community development agency. Nearly 300 employees are engaged in providing services to businesses, communities and workers in the state. While the agency is best known for its efforts to recruit new businesses to Mississippi, the Authority provides services to promote tourism, help communities improve their quality of place, help existing employers identify and meet opportunities and challenges and help workers improve their skills – all with the goal of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of Mississippians. For more information, visit MDA’s Web site at [www.mississippi.org](http://www.mississippi.org).

#### **Memphis Bioworks Foundation**

The Memphis Bioworks Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, formed to lead the collaboration between public, private, academic and government entities to accelerate the growth of the bioscience industry in the region. Memphis Bioworks strives to leverage and expand the regional strengths in the biosciences through education, research, job training, and commercialization. Memphis Bioworks is leading the development of the UT-Baptist Research Park, which serves as the focal point of the city’s biomedical economic development. For more information, visit [www.agbioworks.org](http://www.agbioworks.org) or [www.memphisbioworks.org](http://www.memphisbioworks.org).