

# American Corn Growers Foundation

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For Immediate Release

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## **Ethanol, Wind Energy and Solar Power Are Strong Rural Economic Engines and Key Job Drivers ACGF Sponsoring 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Nebraska Wind and Solar Conference in Lincoln November 7-8, 2016**

WILCOX, NE---May 2, 2016 - "The American Corn Growers Foundation (ACGF) continues to advocate renewable energy as an essential economic development component for the future of the rural economy. It's our top priority," said Gale Lush, ACGF Chairman from Wilcox, Nebraska. "Ethanol is a well-established and powerful economic driver for rural America, underpinning corn prices when exports are stagnant or fail to deliver as projected or promised by free trade policy deals. In 2015 ethanol-driven domestic corn demand did a lot more than defend corn prices. It delivered 85,967 well paying, stable, direct jobs and 271,440 indirect or induced jobs across the U. S., fueling domestic economic growth."

Lush announced that the ACGF continues to lead on wind and solar energy advocacy with ACGF Director Dan McGuire as Co-Chair of the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Nebraska Wind and Solar Conference to be held at the Cornhusker hotel in Lincoln on November 7-8, 2016. "ACGF is proud to again be a Kilowatt sponsor of the 2016 conference," said Lush. "We're pleased to join other key national and state wind and solar industry leaders that are sponsoring this year's Nebraska conference. We urge local, county and state officials to register for the conference at [www.NebraskaWindandSolarConference.com](http://www.NebraskaWindandSolarConference.com).

"Each new 200 megawatt (MW) wind farm built in Nebraska generates about \$1,325,200 in annual property tax revenue, according to one industry study. That is a big-infusion and new tax revenue source to help take the property tax burden off of urban and rural property owners," said Lush. "Wind can help finance school budgets at a time when counties are looking for new economic development projects to expand their property tax base. Nebraska is expected to have about 1,325 MW of installed wind energy capacity by the end of 2016. By catching up to our neighboring states Nebraska can also expand our property tax base with wind and solar energy projects. Iowa recently announced an additional 2,000 MW of new wind development. Given Nebraska's tremendous wind resource we could match that if just 10 Nebraska counties each have a 200 MW wind farm to generate \$13 million in new annual property taxes. Instead of subsidizing Wyoming, by spending our money for their coal and paying their 7% severance tax, we can keep our money right here in Nebraska."

## **Wind for Schools a 2016 Kilowatt Sponsor of Nebraska Wind and Solar Conference**

Dan McGuire, Facilitator of the Nebraska Wind for Schools project reports that the program is pleased to be a Kilowatt sponsor of the 2016 Nebraska Wind and Solar Conference. "Our annual conference is all about public and policy outreach and education on wind and solar industry issues. The Wind for Schools program is all about wind energy education and career development. We engage rural, K-12 schools by making wind energy curriculum and career development resources available and by connecting schools and interested students with Nebraska colleges including UNL's College of Electrical and Computer Engineering and the UNL Wind Applications Center," said McGuire. "New career opportunities include a wide range of jobs, from electrical engineers, to wind turbine technicians, the fastest growing profession in the U.S. Wind power now supports 88,000 jobs across 50 states, but that's just the beginning. According to Tom Kiernan, CEO of the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA), hitting the goal of quadrupling wind power by 2030, to 20 percent of the power grid, could create 380,000 jobs and add \$650 million in annual lease payments. That's a big deal for our young people and their future careers. Rebuilding America's infrastructure ties in directly with the Wind for Schools program."

"35 years of 'globalization' policies has led U.S. businesses, factories and jobs to be outsourced to foreign countries. Now renewable energy can take the lead in reindustrializing the U.S., including jobs that modernize the electrical grid, said McGuire. "A recent announcement that the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) would build on its ongoing efforts to modernize the grid and accelerate the deployment of renewable energy by participating in the development of the Plains & Eastern Clean Line Project (Clean Line), a major clean energy infrastructure project is a great example. U.S. Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz said moving remote and plentiful power to areas where electricity is in high demand is essential for building the grid of the future. Secretary Moniz added that building modern transmission that delivers renewable energy to more homes and businesses will create jobs, cut carbon emissions, and enhance the reliability of our grid."