



American Society of
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News Release

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STEADY PROGRESS IN DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS TO SUPPORT SOLID BIOFUELS INDUSTRY

ST JOSEPH, MICHIGAN — Development of international standards for solid biofuels advanced at a recent meeting of the ISO committee responsible for that work.

The meeting of ISO/TC238, Solid Biofuels, was held in Kuala Lumpur. Attending on behalf of the United States were Scott Cedarquist, standards director at the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) and Chris Wiberg, lab director of Timber Products Inspection/Biomass Energy Lab. Their attendance was sponsored by the Pellet Fuels Institute and by the US Industrial Pellet Association. ASABE coordinates US input on developing standards and responses to balloted proposals.

Among the projects discussed were several focused on safety, in the residential handling and storage of wood pellets, in large-scale handling, in industrial applications, and in fighting fires in pellet storage facilities. When approved and published, these standards may be used within Europe, North America, and elsewhere.

Interest in thermally treated biofuels, such as torrefied, steam-treated, or carbonized, is increasing. A standard on thermal treatment was proposed but ultimately tabled because research and technology is developing rapidly. The group recommended the alternative publication of a technical specification, which provides flexibility while technology develops and understanding of materials deepens.

Additional new standards are under development for determination of ash melting temperature, absorptivity and grindability of thermally treated biofuels, and calibration of optical analyzers for determination of particle size distribution. It is anticipated that more than 50 standards eventually will be published by ISO/TC238 for solid biofuels.

A new ISO committee, ISO/TC300, was created to develop standards for solid recovered biofuels. Initial work will focus on quality and test specifications for biofuels made from lower-grade materials, such as

demolition wood and municipal waste. There are no current plans for the US to actively participate in this new area of standardization, but liaisons established between the two committees will facilitate dissemination of information that may prove relevant to US trade and industry.

Initial TC238 standards development began in 2008 and was based on standards published by the European Union's Central European Committee for Normalization (CEN) and on standards from around the world. To date, 23 standards have been published by TC238 and an additional 20 projects are in various stages of development. Seven of the published standards are classification documents for biomass and graded biofuels, including woody pellets and briquettes, non-woody pellets and briquettes, firewood and chips. In addition, there are 16 standards for testing physical properties and 7 for testing chemical properties of solid biofuels. Other ISO standards are being developed for sampling and sample preparation, including a standard for small-scale sampling. These international standards will ensure a level-playing field among stakeholders, and will help eliminate unfair competition in the market place.

The US and Canadian delegations have cooperated closely in the interest of the producers and users of solid biofuels in North America. Participation in the development of ISO standards is important to protect North American interests, and to secure fair trade with Europe and other markets around the world.

There are currently 38 countries actively following this work. When the technical committee was formed, the attendees came from Europe and North America, but participation is widening. In the Kuala Lumpur meeting 14 nations participated, including China for the first time. Anyone interested in helping develop these international solid biofuel standards is encouraged to contact Scott Cedarquist, at cedarq@asabe.org.

ASABE is recognized worldwide as a standards developing organization for food, agricultural, and biological systems, with more than 250 standards currently in publication. Conformance to ASABE standards is voluntary, except where required by state, provincial, or other governmental requirements, and the documents are developed by consensus in accordance with procedures approved by the American National Standards Institute. For information on this or any other ASABE standard, contact Scott Cedarquist at 269-932-7031, cedarq@asabe.org. A current listing of all ASABE standards projects can be found on the ASABE web site at www.asabe.org/projects.

ASABE is an international scientific and educational organization dedicated to the advancement of engineering applicable to agricultural, food, and biological systems. Further information on the Society can be obtained by contacting ASABE at (269) 429-0300, emailing hq@asabe.org or visiting www.asabe.org/. Additional details on international participation and progress can be found at: http://www.iso.org/iso/iso_technical_committee.html?commid=554401