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## **The Pellet Fuels Institute Announces Agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Industry Groups**

September 12, 2013 (Washington, DC) The Pellet Fuels Institute (PFI) on Wednesday joined the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and three additional biomass groups in signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signifying a commitment by the federal government and industry to jointly grow and promote the wood to energy sector.

The Biomass Thermal Energy Council, the Biomass Power Association and the Alliance for Green Heat also signed the MOU at an event held at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which featured remarks by Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Krysta Harden.

The MOU recognizes the shared goals amongst the signers in expanding the use of wood to energy: creating local jobs, increasing affordable heating and electricity options for rural Americans, improving forest health, reducing wildfire risks, and promoting efficient biomass technologies across residential, commercial and industrial segments of the wood energy arena.

Staff from USDA and the four groups will meet regularly to develop and implement an action plan for wood energy, seeking to increase awareness of USDA program opportunities, encourage adoption of wood to energy technologies, and strengthen coordination of industry and USDA initiatives.

“This MOU shows a significant commitment by the USDA and the biomass industry to work together to expand use of wood energy in our country,” said Scott Jacobs, President of PFI. “I know I speak for all of our membership when I say that we are thrilled to be working in a more deliberate partnership with USDA and our colleagues within the biomass industry. This MOU is a further example of the commitment of PFI and its members to work with USDA and others to develop sustainable and sound land management practices in order to achieve USDA’s goal of providing clean air, clean water, soil preservation, fire hazard reduction and renewable energy for the U.S.”

In remarks at the signing, PFI Executive Director Jennifer Hedrick highlighted the benefits of using pellets, including the significant cost savings realized when switching from fuel oil to pellets, and opportunities to contribute to better forest health and management through the use of forest residues for pellet production.

Hedrick was joined by leaders of the three biomass energy groups in thanking Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack for his commitment to bolstering wood energy use across America. “We’re grateful to Secretary Vilsack for the opportunity to build on existing synergy between USDA and industry to facilitate growth of the wood energy sector,” Hedrick said.

Located in Arlington, Virginia, the **Pellet Fuels Institute** is a North American trade association promoting energy independence through the efficient use of clean, renewable, densified biomass fuel. For more information about PFI contact the Pellet Fuels Institute at 703-522-6778 or visit [www.pelletheat.org](http://www.pelletheat.org).