



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

# **VIRENT WINS INNOVATION AWARD FOR SUGARS TO HYDROCARBONS TECHNOLOGY**

*Award-Winning BioForming® Process Can Speed Shift to Non-Food Plant Sugars as an Energy Source in Place of Petroleum*

Madison, Wis., October 23, 2008 – Virent Energy Systems, Inc. announced today that it has won Best Innovation by a Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise as part of the 2008 ICIS Chemical Business Innovation Awards. Virent's winning BioForming® technology is a novel chemical pathway that converts abundant renewable biomass into the same range of hydrocarbon molecules now refined from petroleum to make fuels and chemicals.

Virent was unanimously selected for this award by the judges who cited the scale of the technology's market potential as key in their decision. The judges were also impressed by the ability to provide a gasoline alternative for use in today's engines and to utilize plant sugars, including from non-food, cellulosic biomass, as feedstocks.

"The big leap and real gain will be the development of fuels from sugars derived from various forms of cellulosic biomass, rather than from food-use crops," said one of the judges, Professor Rodney Townsend, director of science and technology at the United Kingdom's Royal Society of Chemistry and chairman of the European Union's SusChem sustainable chemistry platform.

"We are honored to receive this leading industry award which recognizes the potential of our BioForming technology to be the biorefinery of the future," said Dr. Randy Cortright, Virent Founder and CTO. "Now biomass, instead of petroleum, can be refined into an array of hydrocarbons for use as fuels or chemicals," said Cortright. "Virent is working quickly to commercialize its renewable fuels that are cost-competitive with petroleum fuels and face no distribution or infrastructure compatibility challenges."

Conventional fuels like gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel are mixtures of hydrocarbons, or compounds containing only hydrogen and carbon molecules. Hydrocarbons are ideal for transportation applications because they have high volumetric energy density and are easily transported and stored. A wide variety of hydrocarbons are blended together to make fuels with the composition and properties appropriate for car, truck, train, or air transportation.

Unlike other biofuel technologies, the BioForming process can renewably generate the range of hydrocarbon molecules now produced from petroleum and blended to make gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, and many chemicals. Virent's fuels can be stand-alone products, used at high blends with petroleum fuels, or blended with ethanol.

Virent was among four companies honored. Other winners included ExxonMobil Chemical and its Japanese affiliate Tonen Chemical, Dow Chemical, and Netherlands-based DSM Nutritional Productions.

***Notes to Editors:***

The ICIS Chemical Business article detailing the winning entries can be found at:  
<http://www.icis.com/Assets/GetAsset.aspx?ItemID=21661>

An electronic press kit, including downloadable images, is available at:  
<http://www.virent.com/News/mediakits.html>

Dr. Randy Cortright, Virent Founder and CTO, is available for media interviews upon request.

***ABOUT VIRENT ENERGY SYSTEMS***

Virent Energy Systems is commercializing an advanced biofuel technology to power today's vehicles in place of fossil fuels. Virent's patented BioForming® process delivers more net energy and offers a scalable, cost-competitive alternative to traditional biofuel production routes. Headquartered in Madison, WI, Virent has 75 employees in a state of the art catalytic biorefining development facility. Virent counts Cargill and Honda among its leading investors and collaborates with Royal Dutch Shell on the development of its biogasoline technology. The BioForming technology is based on the Aqueous Phase Reforming process. To learn more, visit: [www.virent.com](http://www.virent.com).

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