



***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

## **Virent CEO Lee Edwards Promotes Benefits of Advanced Biofuels for Farmers Before Senate Agriculture Committee**

*Biofuels and Bioproducts Have the Potential to Transform the Economic Landscape of Rural America, said Virent CEO*

**Madison, Wisconsin – February 15, 2012** – Lee Edwards, Virent President and CEO, testified today about the long term economic growth that will be realized in rural America once Virent’s and other advanced biorefineries’ technologies are deployed at scale. Mr. Edwards testified before the Senate Committee of Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry. The hearing’s theme was *Energy and Economic Growth for Rural America*, and examined policies that would make investments in jobs and opportunities for farmers and rural businesses through new markets, entrepreneurship, regional strategies and energy innovation. A link to the hearing proceedings can be found here: <http://www.ag.senate.gov/hearings/energy-and-economic-growth-for-rural-america>

Mr. Edwards directed much of his testimony to Virent and the biofuels industry’s role in energy security and economic growth for rural America. “Our country has unmatched agricultural and technological competitive advantages which should be true global differentiators.”

Edwards testified that Virent’s renewable fuels and products have the potential to replace more than 90 percent of the petroleum-based products that make up a barrel of crude, unlike first generation biofuels that focused singly on blending into gasoline or diesel.

“Technologies like Virent’s mean that plentiful, plant derived sugars have the potential to compete with petroleum as a source of energy. Direct replacement, drop-in products generated from biomass, such as chemicals, gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel, provide sustainable replacements to petroleum and make energy security and economic growth possible wherever biomass exists,” said Mr. Edwards.

Edwards also discussed how Virent is working toward deploying a first commercial scale plant to produce chemicals and fuels from renewable biomass. “Biorefineries have the potential to transform the economic landscape of rural America – from corn stover in Michigan, Iowa and Nebraska, to switchgrass in Georgia, to woody biomass in places as diverse as Arkansas and Vermont,” said Mr. Edwards.

### **About Virent, Inc.**

Virent is replacing crude oil by creating the chemicals and fuels the world demands using a wide range of naturally-occurring, renewable resources. Its patented technology features catalytic chemistry to convert plant-based materials into a full range of products identical to those made from petroleum, including gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, and chemicals for plastics and fibers. The products are drop-in replacements that enable full utilization of existing logistics infrastructure without blending limitations. The development of Virent’s BioForming® technology platform is supported through strategic partners including Cargill, Coca-Cola, Honda and Shell as well as 120 employees based in Madison, Wisconsin.

The company has received several grants from the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Energy and Agriculture and has been recognized with many honors, including the World Economic Forum Technology Pioneer award and the EPA’s Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Award. Please learn more at [www.Virent.com](http://www.Virent.com).

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