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Bioproducts from Corn

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## **Prairie Gold and GTL Resources USA Complete Collaboration Agreement to Extract Zein Protein**

[Prairie Gold, Inc.](#) (PGI) a Bloomington, IL based company and GTL Resources USA, Inc. (GTL), Itasca, IL have agreed to collaborate on the construction of a zein protein production plant. Zein is a high valued co-product that can be produced from the corn ethanol process. PGI, a technology development company, has been testing their innovative “Corn Oil and Protein Extraction (COPE) process at GTL’s 110 million gallon ethanol plant located near Rochelle, IL. GTL, in concert with their ethanol subsidiary Illinois River Energy, provides space, utilities, and feedstock to extract zein protein from corn.

In 2009 GTL and PGI constructed a 2400 sq. ft. pilot plant on GTL’s ethanol plant site. “The objective of the pilot plant project was to demonstrate the efficient extraction and purification of a corn protein (zein) from the corn kernel, prior to fermentation, resulting in a high quality natural product,” stated Philip Shane, President of PGI. During the demonstration project PGI process engineers, were able to optimize pre-commercialization processes and provide data for the selection of equipment to be used in the first commercial facility. The pilot trials also provided zein samples for market development activities with customers.

Zein is a natural polymer that can be used to make hard coatings (like shellac), confectioners glaze, gums, flexible films, and biodegradable plastics and fibers. Zein is edible and in its pure form is colorless and odorless. These qualities, combined with its competitive functionality, give zein a unique positioning for use in the food, pharmaceutical, and specialty chemical industries. The material has been used for many years in the pharmaceutical industry and as a textile fiber substitute. Interest in its use is growing, but until now zein has been too expensive to enter into high volume applications.

Richard Ruebe, CEO of both GTL and Illinois River Energy, said “This unique technology has the potential to significantly change the way we think about ethanol production in that instead of just producing ethanol and a livestock feed called distillers dried grains, we are becoming a biorefinery capable of producing several food, industrial and chemical products.”

For more information please contact Philip Shane (309) 661-4280 or Richard Ruebe (630)773-1579.