Kuraray cooperates with Amyris on Biofene use

Californian biofuels and renewable chemicals company Amyris announced on 1 August that it has signed an agreement with Japanese Kuraray to develop polymers from a renewable hydrocarbon building block made using Amyris's technology, called Biofene.

Under the agreement, Kuraray will use **Biofene** farnesene to replace petroleum-derived feedstock such as butadiene and isoprene in the production of specified classes of polymers. Upon successful completion of the technical development program for the first polymer, the companies will enter into a supply agreement for Kuraray's exclusive use of Biofene in the manufacturing and commercialization of these polymer products.

"We are very excited to partner with Amyris, a leading renewable products company, to develop innovative polymer products with Biofene," said **Yasuhiro Yamamoto**, director and senior executive officer of Kuraray. "We are confident the new Biofene polymer products will become important additions to our product portfolio and be an integral part of our growth strategy."

"We are committed to bringing innovative, high-performing and sustainable products to the polymers market," said **John Melo**, CEO of Amyris. "Partnering with an industry leader like Kuraray allows us to expand the use of Biofene to produce high-performance polymers as well as strengthen our timely and successful route to market."

End of April the Emeryville based company , that is ranked among the 30 hottest companies in renewable chemicals and materials (according to Biofuels Digest) announced the completion of the first industrial-scale facility for the production of Biofene renewable farnesene. The facility is located in Piracicaba, São Paulo, Brazil at a site owned by **Biomin do Brasil Nutricão Animal Ltda.,** a company focusing on animal nutrition. John Melo said on occasion of the opening that the company expects to produce 9 million liters of Biofene in 2011 and have a total production of 50 million liters in 2012. He said Biofene's carbon footprint is 80 to 90 % less than that of farnesene. "Biofene production will be split between squalane in cosmetics, base oil for lubricant markets, and some small amount of mixed diesel going into renewable diesel for the bus fleet in São Paulo," said Melo. He further noted that renewable chemicals can be more profitable than fuels but that the company remains committed to biofuels. Melo said biofuels production will be scaling up in a joint venture with **Total**, Amyris' biggest shareholder. "The notion that we've shifted from fuels is misunderstood," said Melo. "We have a flexible platform we where we can swing to different applications."

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To produce Biofene, Amyris feeds sugar cane syrup into three 200,000 liter fermentors containing a genetically engineered yeast. The yeast digest the syrup feedstock and produce farnesene, which is then separated and purified. Biofene may then be sold directly into industrial applications or put through chemical finishing steps to form a broad range of renewable products including squalane, base oil and finished lubricants and diesel.

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