UOP Refining Technologies Will be Used to Produce Renewable Fuels from Biomass

UOP LLC, a Honeywell company, announced that its technology was selected for use in Rentech, Inc.'s Rialto Renewable Energy Center for the conversion of biomass to transportation fuels.

The renewable energy center, to be built in Rialto, Calif., will convert biomass, such as yard and tree trimmings, into renewable, ultra-clean diesel fuel and renewable electricity. The new facility will use UOP hydroprocessing technology, which converts hydrocarbons into clean-fuel products. The center is expected to produce roughly 640 barrels-per-day of liquid fuel and 35 megawatts of base-load electricity, enough to power approximately 30,000 homes each day.

In August 2009, eight airlines signed a multi-year agreement with Rentech to together purchase up to 1.5 million gallons per year of diesel from the Rialto Project for use in ground service equipment at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). The Rialto Project is scheduled to start up in late 2012.

"Our technology helps Rentech to produce high-quality, ultra-clean transport fuels, meeting all product standards with a near-zero carbon footprint," said UOP Business Director for Refining Ashis Banerji. "The Rialto Project is an important step in increasing capacity of clean fuels from non-traditional sources."

"We are pleased to add a well recognized technology provider such as UOP to the suite of technologies to be deployed at our Rialto Project," said Timothy DeFoe, Project Director for the Rialto Renewable Energy Center. "The Rialto Project continues to advance, with FEED engineering work well under way. The project, anticipated to be the nation's first commercial biomass gasification facility for the co-production of renewable synthetic fuels and power, will serve as a model for next generation clean energy production."

In the new unit the Rentech-SilvaGas biomass gasification system will be used to produce synthesis gas, or syngas, from biomass feedstock which is converted to ultra-clean hydrocarbons using Rentech's proprietary Fischer-Tropsch process and catalyst. The UOP Unionfining™ process and the UOP Unicracking™ process are then used to upgrade the hydrocarbons to ultra-clean jet and diesel fuel as well as specialty waxes and chemicals.

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