May 2014 News from the International Biochar Initiative

IBI Approves Another IBI Certified Biochar: Vertrolysis LLC's *Vertro Biochar*

IBI is pleased to announce the certification of another biochar in our *IBI Biochar Certification Program*. Vertrolysis LLC, licensed to use the proprietary vacuum catalytic Vertrolysis Process for the production of biochar, can now utilize the *IBI Certified™ Biochar Seal* on its *Vertro* biochar product.

To achieve certification, Vertrolysis LLC submitted an application for *Vertro* biochar that met all of the conditions of the *IBI Biochar Certification Program*, including passing all of the physicochemical testing requirements specified by the *IBI Biochar Standards*—the foundation for IBI biochar certification. The approval of Vertrolysis LLC's biochar signals that leading industry organizations recognize the market value in providing assurances to biochar end-consumers through the display of the *IBI Certified Biochar Seal™*. "This is another key milestone for the biochar industry and for consumers who can be assured that this biochar meets high physicochemical and safety standards for use as a soil amendment," said IBI's Executive Director, Debbie Reed.

IBI's biochar certification program—the first of its kind globally—is a voluntary, self-certifying program created and administered by IBI. It enables biochar manufacturers to certify that their product meets global industry-accepted standards and is safe and effective for use as a soil amendment. The *IBI Biochar Certification Program* is fully automated and accessible via IBI's website, allowing biochar manufacturers to register, apply, and submit all required documentation online.

Phase 1 of the *IBI Biochar Certification Program* is being implemented with biochar manufacturers in the United States and Canada. IBI is actively exploring the expansion of the *IBI Biochar Certification Program* to other regions in the future and we will keep our membership abreast of developments.

For further information on *Vertro* biochar and Vertrolysis LLC and to learn more about IBI biochar certification please click here.

IBI Biochar Standards Version 2.0 Nearing Final Review

The process of completing a policy revision of the *IBI Biochar Standards* Version 2.0 is nearing conclusion. The four proposed policy revisions—which address biochar weathering, post-processing, sampling, and the use of biomass ash from bioenergy production facilities—were amended based on substantive feedback received from the public following the open comment period and informational webinars to discuss the revisions. The amended revisions were recently reviewed by a group of biochar experts and, in the coming weeks, IBI will finalize changes to the draft V2.0 based on expert input, and then post the final proposed revisions and a draft V2.0 for public review and voting by paying IBI membership. At that time we will also publish a summary

and tally of all comments received during the public comment period and webinars, including IBI responses to comments.

IBI welcomes all feedback on the proposed revisions—available for review here [hyperlink http://www.biochar-international.org/sites/default/files/Public_Comment_IBI_Biochar_Standards_V2.0%20clean.pdf]– as well as general comments on the *IBI Biochar Standards,* and invites you to email us your thoughts to standards@biochar-international.org. We are grateful for the continued participation and constructive feedback received from our members, stakeholders, and the biochar community in this important effort to support the growing biochar industry.

Update on the ACR *Methodology for Emissions Reductions from Biochar Projects*

The voluntary carbon offset *Methodology for Emissions Reductions from Biochar Projects* is advancing through the review process with Winrock International's American Carbon Registry (ACR). Following on the public comment period and responses by the methodology development team—comprised of The Climate Trust, The Prasino Group, and IBI—earlier this year, the revised version of the methodology is now undergoing scientific peer review by a panel convened by ACR. The team anticipates responding to at least two rounds of comments from the panel during the spring and early summer. Upon completion of the peer review and approval by ACR, the final methodology will be published on ACR's website and will then be available for use by project proponents. For more information on the methodology please visit ACR's website or contact IBI at info@biochar-international.org.

Consider Certifying your Biochar with IBI

Do you manufacture your own biochar? Do you want to provide quality and safety assurances to your biochar customers? Are you based in the United States or Canada? If so, the *IBI Biochar Certification Program* is for you! Based on the *IBI Biochar Standards*—a guiding document that provides the tools needed to universally and consistently define what biochar is, and to confirm that a product intended for sale or use as biochar possesses the necessary characteristics for safe use—we are confident that the *IBI Biochar Certification Program* is a defining step in creating a biochar industry.

The program, designed to assert the highest level of quality and safety, is accessible to a range of biochar manufacturers. Whether you are an existing manufacturer eager to differentiate your product in the marketplace by achieving IBI Biochar Certification for your biochar, or are simply paying close attention to the program's evolution, begin your path to IBI Biochar Certification today by accessing the *IBI Biochar Certification Program* webpage which contains the necessary information to help you register your biochar, test it, and submit an application to receive IBI Biochar Certification of your product.

IBI Business and Organization Member Profiles

A listing of all current IBI Business and Organization Members can be found on our website. For more information on membership opportunities and benefits, or to join, please see: http://www.biochar-international.org/join. Please note, Business and Organization descriptions are submitted by each individual entity, and are not developed or written by IBI.

New Organization Member:

GAIA International, Inc. (Growth Alternatives In Action) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, founded in 2013, by students at Arizona State University. We work in rural, underdeveloped communities where poor nutrition is a major health concern. Our focus is on creating long lasting partnerships with farmers in these communities, in order to help them implement sustainable agricultural methods into their farming practices. At GAIA International, we understand that the success in agriculture relies deeply on the fertility of the soil. Therefore, our methods are directed

at helping farmers to improve their soil quality in order to increase their crop yields. At the same time, we teach our farmers how to conserve their natural resources and maximize their profits. Our goal is to improve the lives of those at the bottom of the pyramid, through agriculture, by providing them with the tools and knowledge to empower themselves.

GROWTH ALTERNATIVES IN ACTION
"SUSTAINABLE LIVING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY"

For more information, contact Kathleen or see gaiainternational.org

Renewing Business Member:

Control Laboratories

42 Hangar Way
Watsonville, CA 95076
www.biocharlab.com
Tel: 831 724-5422
Fax: 831 724-3188

Control Laboratories has been in business since 1955 and in 2006 extended their vast organics testing to include biochar research and testing. The extensive speculation of the promising benefits of biochar sparked their interest to aide in putting actual numbers and data behind the claims. Control Labs has become one of the top biochar testing facilities in the nation with innovative research and unique tests, as well as expertise in the IBI standards. They have developed test packages for all sectors ranging from the producer to consumer to researcher to aide in better understanding the impacts of biochar for its varying applications. They currently offer biochar tests for biomass feedstock assessment, general characteristics, carbon sequestration, plant germination, metal retention, agricultural nutrient retention, pellet fuel, swale formation, potting mix, plant available agricultural related constituents, soil sediment removal, water retention, soil compression, soil shrinkage and many more.

For more information, contact Frank or Megan or see www.biocharlab.com.

Biochar Briefs: News Roundup for May

We update the website daily with new articles on biochar. For more information, please see: http://www.biochar-international.org/newsbriefs.

Australia

Earth Systems is partnering with Territory Natural Resource Management to help the greater community learn more about biochar through the Biochar Roadshow 2014. There will be workshops and events across May and June to learn more about biochar and its benefits.

New modeling shows carbon removal technology is necessary to fight climate change and biochar has been suggested as one solution for storing carbon in soils. A demonstration plant is proving this to be the case and Australia is leading the way due to its resources and abundant supply of agricultural residues.

Asia

Speakers at an international workshop on Agronomics and Socio-Economic Policy Representation at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) acknowledged that soil fertility can be enhanced with biochar that improves nutrition and the soil's water-retention capacity. Several suggestions included the notion that biochar be promoted by the agriculture sector to mitigate the effects of GHG and increase the productivity of farmers.

United States

Cool Planet Energy Systems, a sustainable energy technology provider, is moving forward with the construction of three small scale biomass-to-petrol refineries. The first plant, known as Project Genesis, will produce 10 million gallons of petrol and also biochar as a by-product. Total investment of the three refineries will be approximately $168 million.

Canada and the United Kingdom

A memorandum of understanding has been signed by Heriot-Watt University, BioFuelNet Canada and Bio-Char Network for biochar research. The recent collaboration marks a significant partnership to investigate the potential of biochar as a technically and economically effective method of capturing carbon in a stabilized form while simultaneously increasing soil quality and adaptability of agriculture to climate change.

Opportunities in Biochar

- Job postings in biochar (as well as research/educational opportunities) can be accessed at: http://www.biochar-international.org/network/jobs.
- Contribute to the *Biology and Fertility of Soils* special issue with your research on biochar. For more information, see the website of the Mediterranean Biochar Symposium: http://www.meditbiochar.org/index.html. Submissions **due May 31**.
- The Barrett Foundation Business Concept Challenge offers up to a $75,000 award to develop a market-based strategy and measurable objectives for addressing a natural resource issue affecting U.S. National Forests and grasslands. The business concept must reflect real opportunities and address financial, operational, and organizational aspects of implementation. Pre-proposals are **due June 6**. For more information, see: http://www.nationalforests.org/conserve/grantprograms/barrett-prize
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) is seeking applications from rural small businesses and agricultural producers for funding to make energy efficiency improvements or to install renewable energy systems. Grant applications and combined grant and guaranteed loan applications are **due by July 7.** For more information, see the REAP website at: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_ReapResEei.html
- Looking for potential grant funding? Check out the Terra Viva Grants Directory which develops and manages information about grants for agriculture, energy, environment, and natural resources in the world's developing countries at: http://www.terravivagrants.org/Home.

Attend a Biochar Training Course for Environmental Sustainability and Economic Development, June 26 – 28, 2014 in Santiago de Compostela, Spain

This course intends to provide an in-depth understanding of biochar for a target audience of government officials, policy makers, financiers and entrepreneurs in the European region. The course will provide an introductory high-level overview of biochar and biochar systems, covering production through to utilization. Specifically, the course will focus on production technologies, biochar characterization, standardization and certification; ability to address specific soil constraints and use in agricultural systems; biochar carbon accounting and climate change; commercialization and economics; and biochar sustainability issues, including potential risks and research gaps. **Registration deadline is May 31st.** For more information on this event, please see: http://www.biochar-international.org/Biochar_Spain_June_2014.

Upcoming Calendar Events

- June 2 – 6, 2014: Woodpecker's Farm Biomass Energy Workshop. Location: Thornfield, MO, United States. For more information: http://www.biochar-international.org/node/5036.
- June 8 – 13: Biochar Symposium entitled “Biochar Soil Amendment for Environmental and Agronomic Benefits” at the 20th World Congress of Soil Science. Location: Seoul, Korea. For more information: http://www.biochar-international.org/node/4494.
- June 10 – 11: The International Conference on Agriculture and Forestry 2014 (ICOAF 2014). Location: Colombo, Sri Lanka. For more information: http://www.biochar-international.org/node/5008.
- June 15 – 20: 3rd Annual Global Conference on Environmental and Water Resources Management, Climate Change, and Energy. Location: London, UK. For more information: http://www.biochar-international.org/node/4773.
- June 22 – 27: The 10th International Symposium on Earthworm Ecology with a session "Earthworm interactions with biochar as a soil amendment". Location: Athens, Georgia, USA. For more information: http://www.biochar-international.org/node/4743.
- June 23 – 26: 22nd European Biomass Conference and Exhibition. Location: Hamburg, Germany. For more information: http://www.biochar-international.org/node/4485.
- June 26 – 28: Biochar Training Course for Environmental Sustainability and Economic Development. Location: Santiago de Compostela, Spain. For more information: http://www.biochar-international.org/Biochar_Spain_June_2014
- June 26 – 28: ORBIT 2014 Conference on Biochar. Location: Gödöllo, Hungary. For more information: http://www.biochar-international.org/node/4716.
- August 8: 2014 Midwest Biochar Conference. Location: Champaign, IL. For more information: http://www.biochar.illinois.edu/conference/

See the IBI Calendar page for more events. To add an event to the calendar, send the information to info@biochar-international.org.

Recently Published Biochar Research

IBI tracks all published research on biochar and includes it in our online bibliography. The following articles were added in the last month. Please visit the website bibliography for more information on any of these articles. Due to copyright infringement laws, we cannot provide full copies of articles unless we have permission from the publisher. If you have published work that is not included, please email us.

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