

## Friesland ethanol project awarded grant

By *CITIZEN STAFF*

FRIESLAND - United Wisconsin Grain Producers in Friesland was one of several agricultural businesses in Wisconsin being awarded a Value Added Producer Grant by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. UWGP was awarded a \$450,000 working capital grant to help pay the start-up costs of personnel, insurance, office supplies, and accounting fees for the 40 million gallon community-owned ethanol plant being built south of Friesland.

"We are appreciative of the support and help from our senators and representatives in Washington to help us secure the grant. The money will enable us to do some things during initial construction that otherwise may have had to be put off until a later date. We are pleased to be getting the grant, it is a definite boost to the project. It also shows the confidence that the USDA has in our project" said UWGP vice president Bill Hermann.

The grants were announced on Dec. 11 by USDA Rural Development state director Frank Frassetto.

"For Wisconsin's entrepreneurs to again successfully compete for these limited dollars on a national basis is a testament to our state's rural progressive spirit and the strength and scope of the individual applications," Frassetto said.

The grants will be used to increase marketing opportunities for the value-added agricultural products, by using the funds to prepare feasibility studies, develop business plans, conduct market research or acquire working capital.

"The Bush administration continues to push for increased investment in value-added processing and agri-marketing ventures providing renewed growth to these important sectors of our economy. And, frankly, it's good to see our tax dollars returned to Wisconsin," Frassetto said.

Other grant recipients are the Living Forest Cooperative in Ashland, which received \$39,500; the Waterloo-based Home Grown Wisconsin Cooperative received \$20,000 and \$8,344 went to an apple cider feasibility study in Stoughton.

The USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity, liquidity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in home ownership, business development and critical community and technological infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available by contacting a local Rural Development office or by visiting the USDA website at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.