

Official: Ethanol plant a go

Construction at site west of city expected to start in fall

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TUSCOLA — Cargill officials confirmed they have purchased land west of Tuscola and plan to start construction of an ethanol plant by fall.

The purchase from Betty Bell Hill, Robert D. Hill and

Susanna Hill was made by Cargill and its spinoff subsidiary, Emerald Renewable Resources. Emerald is the company charged with building up to five ethanol plants across the Midwest.

"Yes, Emerald did indeed make that purchase," said Bill

Brady, a representative with the company's corporate affairs office, after learning the transaction had appeared in the Douglas County clerk's recording of property transactions.

Before the official purchase, Cargill would only say that

Tuscola was being considered as one of the top prospects for the placement of a plant.

Brady confirmed that the project here is a go, though the company still has work to do before the plant can be built.

"(The land purchase) is one of the many steps we'll need to take to make this plant a reality," Brady said.

"But, assuming all the per-

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mits fall into place and everything else works out, construction should start sometime in the fall." The announcement that Cargill was considering

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Proposed East Central Illinois ethanol plants

Project	Location	Annual capacity (million gallons a year)	Status
Danville Renewable Energy LLC	Danville	118 mgy	Proposed
One Earth Energy LLC	Gibson City	118 mgy	Proposed
Emerald Renewable Energy-Tuscola LLC	Tuscola	115 mgy	Land purchased
The Andersons Champaign Ethanol	Champaign	125 mgy	Proposed
Illini Ethanol LLC	Royal	110 mgy	Permit issued
American Ethanol Inc.	Danville	118 mgy	Proposed
Diamond Ethanol LLC	Charleston	60 mgy	Permit issued
American Ethanol Inc.	Gilman	118 mgy	Proposed
Gilman Trail Energy LLC	Gilman	118 mgy	Proposed

Source: Illinois Corn Growers Association

THE NEWS-GAZETTE

PLANT

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Tuscola as a site for the plant came earlier this year.

Tuscola Mayor Dan Kleiss said the possibility of Cargill would be beneficial for the community.

"Cargill is a real good company, and I think that the project would be good for the community," Kleiss said. "We look forward to working with Cargill to help bring about anything it wants to do. We're all pretty excited."

The plant, company officials said, would be located almost next door to the current Cargill AgHorizons facility, which already processes corn for shipment overseas.

That proximity — and easy access to local railways — made the Tuscola location one of the top prospects for the new plant, which is expected to actually increase the volume of corn processed at the current plant.

"It will increase employment; I just don't know how much," Tuscola AgHorizons Manager Doug Childers told the Review in February. AgHorizons cur-

rently employs about 25 people, a number that rises to 40 during harvest season.

Likewise, the current 11 million bushel storage capacity of AgHorizons is expected to double with the addition of the ethanol plant, and the rail spur now used by the company would be extended to reach the ethanol plant.

Cargill has operated the grain-storage facility in Tuscola, located a quarter-mile west of U.S. 45 on U.S. 36, since 1969.

It is the central point of the company's Central Illinois Farm Service Group, which has 14 facilities.