



Left: Lincolnshire miscanthus grower and businessman William Cracroft-Eley, Above: A field of miscanthus

## Miscanthus puts the heat into new market

**A**n increasing area of miscanthus is now being grown for the rapidly growing demand for heat, which is proving to be a lucrative alternative market to the large one provided by the growing number of large power stations using biomass.

"The main market is still these big power stations, which are knocking off a large amount of the crop every year. But now there is a significant number of biomass boilers that will burn miscanthus pellets, so the heat market looks like the next step forward for this sector," Lincolnshire miscanthus grower William Cracroft-Eley told Energy Now.

"There are a number of large poultry producers with automated pellet biomass boilers who are already closely involved in this new area,

said Mr Cracroft-Eley, who founded Terravesta Ltd, which manages all aspects of the energy crop supply from grower through processing and sale to end users.

"Using the potential 350,000ha of suitable planting land would allow for around five million tonnes of crop, with no detriment to food supply. A yield of this scale could create enough sustainable power to meet 24% of the heat demand currently being fulfilled using oil and solid fuel placing miscanthus growers firmly at the heart of the future energy supply landscape," he claimed.

This novel heat solution was being driven to a large extent by retailers and consumers, because it added to the sustainability of products and reduced

the production line's carbon footprint.

As far as the future was concerned, Mr Cracroft-Eley said a number of companies were looking at new ways to establish the crop and some plant breeding companies were looking to develop new varieties that could be used for anaerobic digestion and 'next generation' gasification plants.

"In the meantime, we have had a very good year, with more growers this season than the last one.

"It has been very busy and at the moment we are keen to get hold of as much miscanthus as possible on 10-year contracts, with guaranteed prices, to satisfy both the power and heat markets.

"By securing a sustainable supply from growers, the company is able to process miscanthus into pellets and provide a reliable fuel source to energy producers on a long-term contract basis." ■

See [www.terravesta.com](http://www.terravesta.com)

## GHG emissions revised

Britain's oilseed rape producers can continue to sell their crop for use in the production of biodiesel following the revision of official UK government figures on the greenhouse gas (GHG) emission levels of oilseed rape, originally submitted in the Department for

Transport's (DfT) NUTS2 report.

The previous report had not fully accounted for improving agricultural practices and yield improvements, which would have prevented some regions of the UK selling oilseed rape for biodiesel production without a financial penalty and

onerous paperwork.

To overcome this, the NFU worked closely with project leaders HGCA and the DfT, to improve and update regional GHG emissions data, ensuring all UK farmers had access to the full range of oilseed and cereal markets, including bio-energy. ■