

## **Development of new markets for agricultural fibers through an internet driven database and commercialization network**

Peter A. Nelson

AgroTech Communications, Inc., 7777 Walnut Grove Rd., Suite LLB4, Box 50

Memphis, Tennessee 38120

Fax: (901)309-3823; pnelson@agrotechfiber.com

AgroTech Communications, Inc. is utilizing an advanced, database driven internet site called AgFiberTechnology.com, combined with several field activities including agricultural demonstrations, and conferences, to generate and disseminate pertinent, action oriented market data concerning the use of agricultural fibers in a variety of industrial applications. This information and the network created through AgFiberTechnology.com is being utilized to create commercialization ventures among agricultural entrepreneurs throughout North America. Fibers from agricultural crop residues can be used to make a variety of products including feedstocks for chemicals and fuels, biomass for energy production, fiber for construction materials and specialty pulps, to name a few.

Bast fiber crops including industrial hemp *Cannabis sativa L*, kenaf *Hibiscus cannabinus*, roselle *Hibiscus sabdariffa*, and sunn hemp *Crotalaria juncea*, are currently being utilized in a variety of products such as replacements for glass fiber in automobile composites, high quality animal bedding products, specialty pulps, industrial textiles, and assorted nonwovens. Energy crops such as switchgrass *Panicum virgatum* and miscanthus *Miscanthus X giganteus* are being researched by the United States Department of Energy as potential sources of domestic fuel.