

Information supplied by James Hampton BA, MSc. of Brabbag Fuels Ltd

Brabbag Fuels Ltd was set up to test the market for biomass fuel; currently all of our fuels are imported. However biomass fuels could easily be produced here, on the Isle of Man, offering huge benefits to the cost and security of home heating. How would you like to have a controlling stake in your own fuel supplies? How about greatly reducing the cost of your central heating bill in the short term, and guaranteeing your fuel supply in the long term?

The Facts

- The Isle of Man is at present virtually entirely dependent on imported fossil fuels, over which we have no real control, pay through the nose for and consequently heavily deplete our national balance of payments. It's a lot of money leaving the Island.
- The Isle of Man as an area of land and sea is capable of producing our current domestic energy requirements for all central heating from locally grown biomass alone.
- Biomass energy technology is already commonplace in Europe, with areas such as Scandinavia virtually independent of imported energy right now.

Growing our own energy - Brabbag Co-Operative at March 2010 public meeting

Written by PAG

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- Biomass offers the quickest pay-back of any renewable, it is the most reliable, convenient and the least scenically intrusive. A biomass central heating system is already up to 40% cheaper to run in the UK than oil or gas right now, a percentage that will likely increase.
- Biomass is already growing here, and the harvesting of biomass energy is relatively cheap – be it wood-chip, briquettes, pellets, grains or simply good old fashion seasoned logs – its all within the grasp of a small group of investors or co-operative users.
- Fossil fuels are becoming increasingly difficult to supply and will therefore go on increasing in price. Large energy companies realise this and intend to take control of the Biomass market now while it's still in its infancy. Biomass will undoubtedly become a major energy sector within 20 years. The question is how much do you want to pay for it?

The Idea

To form a co-operative in order to secure the market and capital required to support production and processing of quality biomass fuels on the Isle of Man. Based upon the existing market, initial investments could be directed primarily towards two main areas.

1. LOGS. It is suggested that the co-operative's activities in this area would focus upon establishing contracts to encourage the supply of hardwood, raise the standards of processing, and possibly acquire and operate seasoning & drying facilities if necessary.
2. BRIQUETTES. It is suggested that the co-operative could acquire and run a biomass briquetting plant. Manx made briquettes would be a competitive alternative to coal, and prepare the co-operative for expansion as the biomass energy sector develops.

What next?□

I have completed initial stages of research into supplies of raw materials and machinery and am happy to provide the details upon request. At this stage all we really need to do is establish whether enough people would consider supporting this idea. Please spread the word! It is hoped that the investment required from each member would be in the region of £100, and would require a minimum of 1000 members in order to support / consume initial production. If you would consider investing in a local fuel producers co-operative please contact me in order to register only your interest and thoughts at this stage.

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More information

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