

## State's First Ethanol Plant Dedicated in Burns Flat



The state's first ethanol plant, owned and operated as Spaceport Fuel, was dedicated last month at the Oklahoma Space Industry Development Authority in Burns Flat. The inauguration is a first in alternative fuels for Oklahoma.

At the dedication, Oklahoma Agriculture Secretary Terry L. Peach presented the owners, Jimmy and Rannie Dean, with the state's first permit to produce alcohol for fuel.

"This is an exciting day for the entire state of Oklahoma," Peach said. "Ethanol plants provide the possibility for our agriculture community to produce alternate crops, and we should see some small gains in prices. As we see an increase in prices, that puts profits back into the pockets of farmers and ranchers. This could slow down or stop the migration from our rural communities."

The Spaceport Fuel facility is designed to convert grain sorghum and corn into up to 5,000 gallons per day of ethanol.

Spaceport Fuels produced its first batch of ethanol in November, and is expected to operate at full capacity by the end of January.

The Burns Flat project is especially beneficial to Oklahoma because it is locally owned, Peach said.

"All the revenues generated will stay right here in the community," he said. "It should also have an impact within a 75-mile radius of Burns Flat by using local crops and creating distillers grain for the livestock industry in this area."

Distillers grain is the part of the corn or milo not used in the ethanol making process. One-third of a bushel of the byproduct contains 100 percent of the protein and much of the other nutrients needed for livestock feed.

Rannie Dean owns the facility with his father, Jimmie Dean, who also owns Elk Elevator, a grain elevator company in Elk City.

The Burns flat facility is the first of four proposed ethanol plants to become operational in the state.

Two others are planned for Enid, and one has been proposed for Shattuck. Each of the three remaining plants is expected to produce 55 million gallons of ethanol per year, much more than the 1.8 million-gallon capacity at the Spaceport Fuel plant.

The smaller plant, however, cost less than \$1 million to start up. This is significantly less than the more than \$50 million price tag on the other three projects.

"Smaller plants are not the fad now,' Dean said, "but they're a lot more easily reached by the small farmer, and they have been successful."



PERMIT NO. 1: Secretary of Agriculture Terry L. Peach, left, presents Alcohol Fuel Producer State Permit No. 1 to Jimmy and Rannie Dean, co-owners of Spaceport Fuel, LLC, in Burns Flat.