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## **Prairie Gold Sets its Sights on Commercializing New Corn Products**

Bloomington, IL - A new technology company called Prairie Gold, Inc., has set its sights on commercializing an array of corn products related to the booming ethanol market. The Bloomington-based company's mission is to increase the number of high value co-products related to ethanol production.

"This technology will enable dry-grind ethanol plants to produce up to three new products (corn oil, zein protein, and xanthophylls) without adding additional raw materials to their plant. The goal is to make ethanol production more economical and cost effective and maximize the potential of one of Illinois' greatest assets...corn," said Philip Shane, president, Prairie Gold, Inc.

The potentially valuable oil, zein, and xanthophylls targeted by Prairie Gold are currently lost in the distillers dried grains (DDGS), a lower-valued ethanol by-product used to feed farm animals. A dry-grind ethanol plant could increase its revenue substantially if these components are separated and purified.

Prairie Gold, Inc. has licensed technology from the University of Illinois in order to develop and commercialize ethanol co-product processes and production. The research, funded in part by Illinois corn farmers through the corn checkoff program, uses low-energy technology that is cutting-edge to purify the oil, zein and xanthophyll products.

Included in Prairie Gold's mission is development and marketing of new biodegradable products in the food, nutraceutical, and plastic's marketplace. The technology involves extracting a solvent soluble protein (zein) from corn prior to fermentation in a dry grind ethanol plant. This protein has been the subject in more than 3400 patents since 1976 and has the potential to become many things such as: biodegradable plastic, food and paper coatings, chewing gum base, biodegradable textile fiber, pharmaceutical encapsulation for time release medicines and much more.

The company will develop alliances with ethanol companies and end users to create and cultivate new uses from corn byproducts produced by ethanol plants.

Prairie Gold, a "for profit" corporation was created by the Illinois Corn Growers Association (ICGA) with assistance from the Illinois Corn Marketing Board (ICMB). ICMB has funded the development of this new technology since 1989 and made it possible for Prairie Gold to license and commercialize the technology.