

For Immediate Release
January 22, 2010

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Look to Corn for all your Heating Purposes this Winter

LANSING, MICH. – Are you tired of paying a fortune for imported fossil fuels? Do you want to use a fuel that is environmentally friendly? Then look no further than corn – America’s renewable resource – for all your heating needs.

Corn heating units are devices which generate heat from burning shelled corn. Although these devices are similar to wood-burning stoves, they are designed to burn a dry granular fuel, such as shelled corn. Some units are truly multi-fuel units that can burn pellets, nutshells, small wood chips and other small grains such as rye, wheat and barley, in addition to corn.

Corn heating units can be used for many different heating purposes and can take the place of other traditional heating sources. Dr. Chris Schilling, a professor of Mechanical Engineering at Saginaw Valley State University, has done extensive research on corn heating unit efficiency. “An average 2,000 square foot home would require approximately 219 bushels of corn a year, costing roughly \$956 a year considering a price of \$3.50 a bushel for corn,” said Schilling. “Compare that cost to \$2,964 for electricity priced at \$0.1185 per kilowatt, \$1,993 for propane at \$1.82 per gallon, or \$1,118 for natural gas at \$11.46 per thousand cubic feet. Using corn as a heat source makes economic sense and could save up to \$2,000 a year on heating costs.”

Not only is corn still a cost-effective alternative, but it is also an environmentally-friendly solution. “It took more than four million years to create fossil fuels, but as a corn grower I can grow a corn crop in four months, which can be used to heat my home,” said Clark Gerstacker, CMPM president, National Corn Growers Association Corn Board member and a corn grower from Midland. “Corn, unlike fossil fuel, is a renewable resource that is replenished on a yearly basis.” Improving efficiencies in the production practices of this annually grown crop have resulted in an increasing yield, year after year. In fact, America’s corn farmers can grow five times as much corn today on 20 percent less land than they did in the 1930’s. This increase in yield resulted in an estimated 1.8 billion bushel carryover for 2009 – proving that there is more than enough crop for all of our corn needs.

Corn heating units can be used to heat a single room, an entire house, an outdoor building, a factory or even an entire school system or college campus. Depending on the heating needs, corn heating units come in various sizes and shapes with many different features. Once the heating needs have been determined, consumers can choose from a stove, furnace or boiler and they can also choose between an indoor or outdoor unit. Consumers looking for specific information regarding corn heating units should contact a corn heating manufacturer or dealer directly. Visit www.micorn.org/heat for more information.

Headquartered in Lansing, the CMPM is a legislatively-established statewide program that utilizes one-cent per bushel of Michigan corn sold. Investments are made in the areas of research, education, market development, and new uses in an effort to enhance the economic position of Michigan corn farmers. The CMPM works cooperatively with the MCGA, a grassroots-membership association representing the state’s corn grower’s political interests. For more information on the CMPM and the MCGA, visit the web site at www.micorn.org.

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