

Article published Saturday, December 24, 2005

ETHANOL

6 Ohio sites identified for plants 2 contenders in region

By **JON CHAVEZ**
BLADE BUSINESS WRITER

An investment group that is building an \$80 million ethanol plant near Lima, Ohio, said yesterday it has finished identifying six more sites, including two in northwest Ohio, that are ideal for new ethanol plants.

Greater Ohio Ethanol LLC would like to put plants on all the sites and hopes to assemble a deal for one by July.

The Lima plant is designed to make 57 million gallons of ethanol - a clean-burning gasoline additive made primarily from corn - and is scheduled to be operating by fall, said Greg Kruger, president and co-founder of Greater Ohio Ethanol.

The six new sites were identified by an alternative fuels consulting firm, BBI International. Mr. Kruger said his company plans to move forward on developing them before the Lima plant is finished.

He declined to disclose exact locations, but said the sites are in Wood, Seneca, Mercer, Darke, Montgomery, and Clark counties.

Greater Ohio Ethanol does not have the estimated \$400 million needed to build seven ethanol plants by 2012, the firm's original goal, the company leader said.

"We have a progressive business plan to raise the equity," Mr. Kruger said. "Each one of these plants will be a wholly owned subsidiary. We would go to the equity market to raise the capital."

Greater Ohio Ethanol would form partnerships with city, county, or municipal governments to secure sites and obtain necessary regulatory permits.

Ohio has no operating ethanol plants, but several projects are under way. The Lima plant will be among the first built.

Two plants are being built in Michigan.

In Lenawee County, Great Lakes Ethanol LLC is building an \$80 million plant in Riga Township that can make 50 million gallons annually. It is to be open by fall.

Also planned for fall operation is one near Albion, built by The Andersons Inc. of Maumee for \$86 million, a plant with a capacity of 55 million gallons.