

The Potential for Producing Ethanol from Biomass in the Northeast

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The purpose of this study is to identify the types of biomass that can be used to produce ethanol and evaluate biomass-to-ethanol opportunities in the region. The study includes: 1) a description of the basic process used to convert biomass to ethanol, focussing on the simultaneous saccharification and fermentation (SSF) process; 2) identification and description of the types of the relevant characteristics that affect the suitability of a biomass material for use as feedstock at an ethanol production facility; 3) identification of the types of biomass feedstocks generated in the region that could potentially be used for ethanol production; 4) identification of factors affecting future biomass feedstock availability and use in the region including feedstock costs, competing uses, and a variety of environmental, regulatory, and siting issues; 5) evaluation of near- and long-term potential for producing ethanol from each of the biomass materials included in the study and preliminary determination of locations in the region where there may be sufficient feedstock for developing commercial-scale ethanol production facilities; and 6) suggestions for the logical next steps.