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Ethanol conflicts unlikely

By **LISA WHITECOTTON, Times Leader Staff Writer**

AS CONSTRUCTION PLANS move forward for the proposed ethanol plant in Harrison County, officials say that a similar facility planned in Coshocton won't create negative competition for their plant.

Harrison County Community Improvement Council Executive Director Chris Copeland said that the proposed Coshocton facility, located approximately 60 miles from Cadiz, "has been in the works for several years." Copeland noted that the close proximity of the Coshocton project has not caused any conflicts over funding and that "the state of Ohio has been supportive of both projects."

An official groundbreaking ceremony was held in Coshocton on Tuesday, though construction began last month. Altra Inc., a Los Angeles biofuel company, owns Coshocton Ethanol LLC. The \$117 million facility is expected to open in October 2007 and produce 60 million gallons of ethanol per year.

"There's been no air of competition" between the sites regarding funding or acquisition of materials, Copeland explained. "In Harrison County, we will be bringing in

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Affiliated sites

corn by rail and truck from other areas as well as using locally-grown corn, and I assume that the Coshocton plant will be doing the same."

According to reports from the Coshocton Tribune, Altra Inc. CEO Larry Gross said that "about half of the corn used" by the Coshocton plant "will be from local sources."

As for the plants' finished product, Copeland said that because "our products will be sold in a national market," he anticipates that there will be more than enough demand to support both facilities.

In Harrison County, crews are preparing to begin heavy excavation to install a 30-inch clay base in the areas that will eventually hold the facility's structures. "It's my understanding that the base will be laid down one six-inch layer at a time," Copeland said.

After this process is complete, crews will begin pouring concrete footers. Copeland anticipates that this phase of construction will take place "this fall," followed by the installation of steel beams "by year's end."

Last month, the Ohio Department of Development approved a \$400,000 grant to be used to turn Dickerson Church Road into a paved access road to the new Harrison ethanol plant.

This week, Copeland said that the county has already submitted an application for the first half of a two-year, \$600,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission and will be sending a pre-application for the second half of the grant in the near future. If awarded, this grant will provide additional funding necessary for the paving project, anticipated to cost about \$1.2 million, Copeland said.

Ohio Gov. Bob Taft's office has reported that the plant's annual payroll is expected to be over \$7 million per year and is expected to generate more than \$85 million in cash flow for the area.

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Along with this grant, Taft's office has announced more than \$14 million in business and roadwork development grants across the state. These grants are administered by the Ohio Department of Development and are approved by the State Controlling Board.

Whitecotton can be reached at lwhitecotton@timesleaderonline.com.

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