

Date: March 1, 2006

## Aventine Forms Ethanol Marketing Agreement With E<sup>3</sup> BioFuels-Mead

Pekin, Illinois. – Aventine Renewable Energy, Inc. announced today that it has signed an agreement to market all fuel grade ethanol produced by E<sup>3</sup> BioFuels-Mead. The 24 million gallon-a-year ethanol plant located in Mead, Nebraska will begin production in July 2006.

The E<sup>3</sup> BioFuels-Mead relationship marks Aventine's 14<sup>th</sup> ethanol marketing agreement. Aventine currently supplies ethanol through the company's ethanol plant production, business relationships and marketing agreements. Terms of the E<sup>3</sup> BioFuels-Mead agreement were not disclosed.

Additional producers include Ace Ethanol LLC (Stanley, WI), Adkins Energy LLC (Lena, IL), Glacial Lakes Energy (Watertown, SD), VeraSun Energy (Aurora, SD and Fort Dodge, IA), Quad County Corn Processors Cooperative (Galva, IA), Heartland Grain Fuels (Aberdeen and Huron, SD), Granite Falls Energy (Granite Falls, MN), Agri-Energy (Luverne, MN), Reeve Agri-Energy (Garden City, KS), Nebraska Energy, LLC (Aurora, NE), Midwest Ethanol Producers, Inc. (O'Neil, NE), Panda Energy (Hereford, TX) and Aventine Renewable Energy, Inc. (Pekin, IL).

Ethanol is a domestic, renewable fuel that is used as a high-quality octane enhancer. As an oxygenate ethanol is capable of reducing air pollution and improving automobile performance. Ethanol blended fuels account for more than 12 percent of all automotive fuels sold in the United States.

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### **Forward Looking Statements**

Information included in this press release may be deemed to be "forward looking statements" within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act and Section 21E of the Exchange Act. The statements which are not historical facts contained in this release are forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. Aventine's actual results could differ materially from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. Factors that could cause or contribute to such differences include, but are not limited to:

- Changes in or elimination of laws, tariffs, trade or other controls or enforcement practices such as:
  - National, state or local energy policy;
  - Federal ethanol tax incentives
  - Regulation currently under consideration pursuant to the passage of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which contains a renewable fuel standard and other legislation mandating the usage of ethanol or other oxygenate additives;
  - State and federal regulation restricting or banning the use of Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether ("MTBE")

- Environmental laws and regulations applicable to our operations and the enforcement thereof;
- Changes in weather and general economic conditions;
- Overcapacity within the ethanol and petroleum refining industries;
- Total United States consumption of gasoline
- Availability and costs of products and raw materials, particularly corn, coal and natural gas;
- Labor relations;
- Fluctuations in petroleum prices;
- Our or our employees' failure to comply with applicable laws and regulations;
- Our ability to generate free cash flow to invest in our business and service our indebtedness;
- Limitations and restrictions contained in the instruments and agreements governing our indebtedness;
- Our ability to raise additional capital and secure additional financing;
- Our ability to retain key employees;
- Liability resulting from actual or potential future litigation; and
- Competition.