

## Vilsack heads “Top 125 People in the Advanced Bioeconomy” poll for 2015

Jim Lane

**In the annual rankings, voters reward commercial deployments at scale, key figures in deployment of alternative fuels, and pioneers in renewable chemicals. International leaders gain.**

In Florida, US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack headed the “Top 125 People in the Advanced Bioeconomy” rankings as nominated and voted by the readers of The Digest and the publication’s editorial board.

Vilsack was followed in the top 10 by Beta Renewables CEO Guido Ghisolfi; POET’s Jeff Broin and Jeff Lutt; US Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz; Advanced Biofuels Association president Mike McAdams; BIO’s Industrial & Environmental section head Brent Erickson; REG CEO Dan Oh; GranBio CEO Bernardo Gradin; Luciano Coutinho, president of BNDES (Brazilian Development Bank) and Julio Cesar Maciel Ramundo, BNDES’ Industrial Director; and Ray Mabus, US Secretary of the Navy.

This year, the Digest recognized a complete Top 125 for the first time, in recognition of the large number of write-in votes and the distributed nature of the voting, in which more than 350 individuals received votes in the poll.

**READ MORE:** [The Complete Top 125 Poll.](#)

“For the fifth year in a row, readers overwhelmingly identified US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack as the most significant personality in the bioeconomy,” commented Digest editor & publisher Jim Lane. “But key US Senators and members of Congress, and key US trade group leaders were high on the list — a clear recognition of how critical the fight for the Renewable Fuel Standard remains in the eyes of the voters.”

“The voters increasingly cared less about boundaries between countries and boundaries between first-gen and second-gen. Biodiesel leaders moved up, as did ethanol executives who have deployed advanced technologies and strategies; 40% of the top 15 were non-US and more than a third of the top 30, and overall, 33 leaders from organizations based in 15 different countries were recognized in the poll.

“Most importantly, it is coming down to deployment. Gallons count, hard dollars count; the voters increasingly turned to actual production and actual nameplate capacity, and the political and financial leaders associated with deployment.”

### CEOs

Among top company CEOs were Beta Renewable’s Ghisolfi; POET’s Lutt; GranBio’s Gradin; REG’s Oh; Raizen CEO Vasco Dias; Solazyme CEO Jonathan Wolfson, LanzaTech CEO Jennifer Holmgren, Genomatica CEO Christophe Schilling; Abengoa CEO Manuel Sanchez Ortega; Enerkem CEO Vincent Chornet; Algenol CEO Paul Woods; Green Plains CEO Todd Becker; Iogen CEO Brian Foody; Novozymes CEO Peder Holk Nielsen, CEO, Novozymes; and DSM CEO Feike Sijbesma, CEO.

### Association executives

Among association executives leading the poll were ABFA's Mike McAdams, BIO's Brent Erickson, the NBB's Joe Jobe, the RFA's Bob Dinneen, Growth Energy CEO Tom Buis and co-chair Wes Clark, AEC chief Brooke Coleman, UNICE chief Elizabeth Farina, Algae Biomass Organization Executive Director Matt Carr, re:chem alliance's Corinne Young; and German Bioeconomy Council head Christine Lang.

## **Scientists**

Among scientists, Michigan State's Bruce Dale once again led the poll, followed by Berkeley's Jay Keasling, Iowa State's Robert Brown, U Wisconsin's George Huber, with a number of newcomers in the poll including Aston University's Tony Bridgewater and PNNL's Douglas Elliott.

## **Policy leaders**

Joining Tom Vilsack at the top among policy leaders were US Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, Washington state governor Jay Inslee, Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber, California Governor Jerry Brown and Iowa Governor Terry Branstad, and a trio of US Senators in Debbie Stabenow, Amy Klobuchar and Patty Murray.

## **Pairing leaders in the poll**

In numerous cases, voters paired or split votes for key industry executives and other stakeholders; these were correspondingly paired in the rankings by the Digest. In addition, the editorial board took into consideration management or leadership changes, or similar functions that led to vote-splitting.

# The Top 125 People in the Advanced Bioeconomy 2015

Jim Lane

The “Top 125 People in the Advanced Bioeconomy” for 2015 as nominated and voted by the readers of The Digest and the publication’s editorial board.

- 1 Tom Vilsack, US Secretary of Agriculture
- 2 Guido Ghisolfi, CEO, Beta Renewables
- 3 Jeff Lutt, CEO, POET, Jeff Broin, Chairman, POET
- 4 Ernest Moniz, Secretary of Energy
- 5 Michael McAdams, President, Advanced Biofuels Association
- 6 Brent Erickson, EVP Industrial & Environmental Section, BIO
- 7 Daniel Oh, CEO, Renewable Energy Group
- 8 Bernardo Gradin, CEO, GranBio
- 9 Luciano Coutinho president, BNDES (Brazilian Development Bank); Julio Cesar Maciel Ramundo, Industrial Director
- 10 Ray Mabus, US Secretary of the Navy
- 11 Vasco Dias, CEO, Raizen; Pedro Mizutani, COO
- 12 Matthew Tipper, VP, Alternative Energy, Shell
- 13 Bill Feehery, President, DuPont Industrial Biosciences; Jan Koninckx, Global Business Director for Biofuels, DuPont
- 14 Jonathan Wolfson, CEO, Solazyme
- 15 Jennifer Holmgren, CEO, LanzaTech
- 16 Bob Dinneen, President, Renewable Fuels Association
- 17 Christophe Schilling, CEO, Genomatica
- 18 David Danielson, US Assistant Secretary of Energy, Peter Davidson, Executive Director, DOE Loan Programs Office
- 19 Brooke Coleman, Executive Director, Advanced Ethanol Council
- 20 Jonathan Male, Valerie Reed, Joyce Yang, Zia Haq, DOE DOE Biomass Program
- 21 Manuel Sánchez Ortega, CEO, Abengoa
- 22 Vincent Chornet, CEO, Enerkem; Tim Cesarak, Sr VP, Enerkem



**125**  
Top People  
in the Advanced  
Bioeconomy  
2015

- 23 Paul Woods, CEO, Algenol
- 24 Todd Becker, CEO, Green Plains Renewable Energy
- 25 Brian Foody, CEO, Iogen
- 26 Joe Jobe, CEO, National Biodiesel Board
- 27 Elizabeth Farina, CEO, UNICA
- 28 Tom Buis, CEO Wes Clark co-chairman, Growth Energy
- 29 Peder Holk Nielsen, CEO, Novozymes
- 30 Feike Sijbesma, CEO; Anton Robek, President Bio-based Products and Services, DSM
- 31 Tom Hicks, Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy; Dennis McGinn, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy; Chris Tindal, Director, Operational Energy, US Navy
- 32 Mike Hamilton, CEO, Renmatix; Fred Moesler, CTO, Renmatix
- 33 John Melo, CEO, Amyris
- 34 Jim Macias, CEO, Fulcrum Bioenergy
- 35 Matti Lievonen, CEO, Neste Oil
- 36 Jay Inslee, Governor of Washington; John Kitzhaber, Governor of Oregon; Jerry Brown, Governor of California
- 37 Markus Pompejius, CEO, Verenum; Vice President White Biotechnology North America, BASF
- 38 Debbie Stabenow, Amy Klobuchar, Patty Murray – US Senators
- 39 Lee Edwards, CEO, Virent, Randy Cortright, PhD, CTO, Virent Energy Systems
- 40 Harry Baumes, Director, Energy Policy, USDA; Todd Campbell, USDA; Chris Cassidy, USDA
- 41 Terry Branstad, Governor of Iowa
- 42 Howard Janzen, CEO, Cool Planet
- 43 Bill Radany, CEO Verdezyne
- 44 Jean Francois Huc, CEO, BioAmber
- 45 Steve Csonka, Executive Director, CAAFI
- 46 Ganesh Kishore, PhD, CEO, Malaysian Life Sciences Fund, Roger Wyse, co-chairman, Malaysian Life Sciences Fund
- 47 Adam Monroe, president, Americas, Novozymes
- 48 Anna Rath, CEO, NexSteppe
- 49 John May, Managing Director, Stern Brothers; Mark Riedy, Partner, Kilpatrick Townsend; John Kirkwood, Kreig DeVault

50 Bruce Dale, PhD, Michigan State University

51 Matt Carr, CEO, Algae Biomass Organization

52 Pat Gruber, PhD, CEO, Gevo

53 Eric McAfee, CEO, Aemetis

54 Daniele Ferrari, CEO, Versalis (Eni)

55 Philip New, CEO, BP Biofuels

56 Mark Niederschulte, COO, Ineos Bio

57 K'Lynne Johnson, CEO, Elevance Renewable Science

58 Sean Sutcliffe, CEO; Joel Stone, President, North America, Green Biologics

59 Noubar Afeyan, PhD, CEO, Flagship Ventures, David Berry, MD, Flagship Ventures

60 Daphne Preuss, CEO, Chromatin

61 Robert Graham, CEO, Ensyn

62 Chris Standlee, Gerson Santos-Leon, EVPs, Abengoa Bioenergy

63 Mark Emalfarb, CEO, Dyadic International

64 Dirk Kronemeijer, CEO, SkyNRG

65 Jay Keasling, Professor, UC Berkeley, CEO, JBEI; Harvey Blanch

66 Veronique Hervouet, Senior Vice President, Investments, Total Energy Ventures

67 Theodora Retsina, CEO, American Process

68 Paul Beckwith, CEO, Butamax

69 Kelly Tiller, CEO, Genera Energy

70 Robert Brown, PhD, Professor, Iowa State University

71 Tom van Aken, CEO Avantium

72 Kef Kasdin, CEO, Proterro

73 George Huber, University of Wisconsin

74 Philip Pienkos, PhD, Tom Foust, Mary Bidy, Helena Chum for NREL

75 Bill Lese, MD, Braemar Energy Ventures

76 Martin Sabarsky, CEO, Cellana

77 Todd Taylor, Partner, Frederickson & Byron

78 Richard Hamilton, CEO, Ceres

- 79 Rob Tripp, CEO, Benefuel
- 80 Vinod Khosla, Managing Partner; Samir Kaul, MD, Khosla Ventures
- 81 Mike Hart, Sierra Energy
- 82 Chris Somerville, PhD, Professor, UC Berkeley Director, EBI
- 83 James Levine, CEO, Sapphire Energy
- 84 Denis Lucquin, Sofinnova Partners
- 85 Bill Levy, CEO, Pacific AgStock
- 86 Pramod Chaudhari, CEO, PRAJ Industries
- 87 Doug Berven, VP, POET
- 88 John Plaza, CEO, Imperium Renewables
- 89 John Benemann, PhD, CEO, Benemann Associates
- 90 Geoff Cooper, VP, Renewable Fuels Association
- 91 Graham Noyes, Acting head, Low Carbon Fuels Coalition
- 92 Stefan Unnasch, CEO, Life Cycle Associates
- 93 Nancy Young, VP, Environmental Affairs, Airlines for America, Rich Altman, Exec Director Emeritus, CAAFI, John Heimlich, Chief Economist, Airlines for America
- 94 Barry Cohen, Executive Director, National Algae Association
- 95 Todd Garner, CEO, Protec Fuel
- 96 Joanne Ivancic, Exec Dir, Advanced Biofuels USA
- 97 Riggs Eckelberry, CEO, OriginOil
- 98 Murray McLaughlin, Executive Director, BioIndustrial Innovation Canada
- 99 Gerald Ostheimer, Director, SE4ALL
- 100 Dr. Susan Pond, chairman, Australian Initiative for Sustainable Aviation Fuels
- 101 Nate Brown, Director, Federal Aviation Administration
- 102 Jeff Martin, CEO, Yulex
- 103 Corinne Young, Chief Advocate, re:Chem Alliance
- 104 Tim Eggeman, CEO, ZeaChem
- 105 Dave VanderGriend, CEO, ICM
- 106 Scott Peters, Matt Slamon, co-chairs, (US) House Algae Caucus

- 107 Jason Webber, Principal, Sustainable Conversion Ventures
- 108 Michael Wang, Manager, Argonne National Laboratory
- 109 Kyle Teamey, CEO, Liquid Light
- 110 Jamie Bacher, CEO, Pareto Biotechnologies
- 111 Tim Zenk, EVP, Algenol
- 112 Charles Wyman, CEO, Vertimass
- 113 Bill Brady, CEO, Mascoma
- 114 Tim Brummels, CEO, Canergy
- 115 Bob and Kelly King, Pacific Biodiesel
- 116 Douglas Elliott, Senior scientist, Pacific National Northwest Laboratories
- 117 Jerry Fiddler, chairman, Solazyme; board member, NexSteppe
- 118 Prof. Tao Zhang, Director of Dalian Institute of Chemical Physics
- 119 Christine Lang, head, German Bioeconomy Council
- 120 Wally Tyner, professor, Purdue
- 121 Jim Stewart, Chairman, Bioenergy Producers Association
- 122 Tony Bridgewater, Director of Bioenergy Research Institute, Aston University
- 123 Mark Warner, Chief Engineering Officer, Impossible Foods
- 124 Mark Burk, CTO, Jeff Lievense, VP, Genomatica
- 125 Lloyd Ritter, Director, Green Capitol