

Release date: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2006



## New Contract to boost Green Power in the Thames Valley

TV Bioenergy today announces a new contract with renewable generator Slough Heat & Power that will lead to the planting of 1000 hectares of short rotation coppice (SRC) on farms in the Thames Valley region.

Under the agreement, TV Bioenergy will supply a minimum of 10,000 tonnes per annum for the next 15 years starting in 2006. Initially, the bulk of the material will comprise clean chipped wood from tree surgeons but by 2012, 70% of the total (7000 tonnes) will be supplied from SRC.

TV Bioenergy Coppice (a subsidiary of TV Bioenergy) is actively seeking farmers to grow the crop. Farmers will be offered a guaranteed minimum price for dry wood chips delivered to the end-user, with the possibility of an additional premium depending on the price achieved in the market place. The group already has 14 members growing a total of 110 hectares and is looking to raise this to 1000 hectares over the next three to four years for Slough Heat and Power and other local projects.

Keith Richards, managing director at TV Bioenergy, comments on the deal: "This is a significant milestone for the energy crops industry and great news for farmers. Usually if you want to grow energy crops you have to believe in a power station that might one day be built. Slough Heat and Power has been running successfully for decades and farmers will be able to sign up without worrying about where their crop will go. The market for SRC is here and now".

Jon Pebworth, managing director of Slough Heat and Power, adds: "We're delighted to be encouraging the planting of energy crops in the Thames Valley. It's important to us to secure a long term fuel supply and through this deal we will provide an outlet for farmers hoping to diversify whilst also making a significant investment in our local rural economy".

-Ends-

## **Notes to Editors**

### ***About Short rotation coppice willow***

Short Rotation Coppice (SRC) involves planting fast growing tree species such as willow in high densities with a harvesting cycle of three years. The willow plantation is made up of a selection of varieties to reduce risk of disease and should remain viable for more than 20 years. It can be planted on set-aside and arable land and farmers can get a planting grant worth £1000 per hectare (before end June 2006) and qualify for their Single Farm Payment (SFP) as normal. Using SRC as a fuel is beneficial because virtually all the carbon dioxide released during its combustion has been previously removed from the atmosphere during the growth of the crop.

### ***About TV Bioenergy Coppice***

TV Bioenergy Coppice was launched in December 2003 as the UK's 3rd SRC producer group set up under DEFRA's Energy Crops Scheme. TV Bioenergy Coppice is a subsidiary of TV Energy, a not-for profit organisation whose mission is to promote, educate and deliver practical sustainable energy solutions to business, organisations, communities and individuals in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Northern Hampshire and Surrey. Like TV Energy, TV Bioenergy Coppice works closely with SEEDA, GOSE and partner organisations in the SE Region of England to establish a sustainable wood fuel supply infrastructure.

### ***About Slough Heat and Power***

SHP is part of the Slough Estates plc property group. It is a multi-utility company dedicated to serving the customers of the Slough Trading Estate with high quality services with a low impact on the environment. The 40 megawatt power station was formerly coal-fired but was converted to become one of Britain's cleanest power stations running on wood chips and non recyclable packaging materials. SHP invests over £3m a year into rural economy, and has created dozens of jobs in woodland management.

### **For further information:**

For Slough Heat and Power: Jon Pebworth- Managing Director

Tel: 01753 213 234

Andrew Ellis (technical manager)

Tel: 01753 213 263

Website: [www.sloughheatandpower.co.uk](http://www.sloughheatandpower.co.uk)

For TV Bioenergy Coppice: Dr Gillian Alker - Energy Crops Advisor

Tel: 01635 817420, mobile: 07795 561053

Website: [www.tvbionenergy-coppice.co.uk](http://www.tvbionenergy-coppice.co.uk)