



AVENTINE ANNOUNCES REOPENING OF AURORA EAST PLANT & PROMOTION OF OFFICER

DALLAS – July 20, 2011 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – Aventine Renewable Energy Holdings, Inc. (Nasdaq BB: AVRW:OB) a leading producer and marketer of ethanol and related products announced that it has taken two additional steps on its path toward a stronger financial future: the company expects to restart production at one of its idled ethanol facilities, Aurora East, located in Nebraska, and it has promoted its Chief Financial Officer.

The company has completed improvements to the fermentation process at its Aurora East plant in Nebraska. It expects to resume production the week of July 25, 2011. The plant's production has been idled since late April.

The company has also promoted John Castle to Executive Vice President, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer. Castle, responsible for the finance function of the business, will also assume responsibility for business operations. Prior to his position at Aventine, Castle served in a number of financial leadership positions, including in the ethanol industry as the Senior Vice President of Operations, Chief Financial Officer and Secretary of White Energy. Castle brings to his new duties his experiences at several companies, including as director of accounting for Dresser, Inc., global manufacturer of highly engineered energy infrastructure and oilfield products, his work as Chief Financial Officer at Rohn Industries, as well as the Vice President-Treasurer and Corporate Controller of Telxon Corporation. Castle is a Certified Public Accountant with a master's degree in business administration from Xavier University and a bachelor of science in accounting from Eastern Illinois University.

“Castle's CFO expertise at Aventine has proven his ability to manage many moving parts through the company's transition. He has managed complicated financial details in extremely difficult circumstances and John now will apply his leadership skills to the manufacturing side of our business with the goal being to maximize production at all plants,” said Aventine's CEO, Thomas Manuel.

“Our operational focus is to implement identified changes to bring the Mount Vernon plant closer to full capacity. Resolving new plant production issues will help us move forward with the start-up of the Aurora West facility, an identical twin of the Mount Vernon facility. We are also working through the mechanical systems of the Canton, Ill. facility in preparation of starting that plant later in the year,” said Castle.

For further information, please refer to information filed with the Securities Exchange Commission.

Forward Looking Statements

Certain information included in this press release may be deemed to be “forward looking statements” within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. In some cases, you can identify these statements by forward-looking words such as “may,” “might,” “will,” “should,” “expect,” “plan,” “anticipate,” “believe,” “estimate,” “predict,” “potential” or “continue,” and the negatives of these terms and other comparable terminology. These forward-looking statements, which are subject to known and unknown risks, uncertainties and

assumptions about us, may include the timing of completion of improvements and restarting operations at our Aurora, Nebraska dry mill plant; the enhanced production of the Mr. Vernon facility; the start up of the plant in Canton, Illinois; projections of our future financial performance; and the performance of our management team. These statements are only predictions based on our current expectations and projections about future events. There are important factors that could cause our actual results, level of activity, performance or achievements to differ materially from the results, level of activity, performance or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements.

Some of the factors that may cause the Company's actual results, developments and business decisions to differ materially from those contemplated by such forward looking statements include our ability to obtain and maintain normal terms with vendors and service providers, our ability to maintain contracts that are critical to our operations, our ability to attract and retain customers, our ability to fund and execute our business plan and any ethanol plant expansion or completion projects, our ability to receive or renew permits to construct or commence operations of our capacity additions or other facilities in a timely manner, or at all, laws, tariffs, trade or other controls or enforcement practices applicable to our operations, changes in weather and general economic conditions, overcapacity within the ethanol, biodiesel and petroleum refining industries, availability and costs of products and raw materials, particularly corn, coal and natural gas and the subsequent impact on operations, changes in weather and general economic conditions, overcapacity within the ethanol, biodiesel and petroleum refining industries, availability and costs of products and raw materials, particularly corn, coal and natural gas and the subsequent impact on margins, our ability to raise additional capital and secure additional financing, our ability to service our debt or comply with our debt covenants, our ability to attract, motivate and retain key employees, liability resulting from actual or potential future litigation or the outcome of any litigation with respect to our auction rate securities or otherwise, and plant shutdowns or disruptions.

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