



Green POWER

Antonio Vallespir is the CEO of Vertex Bioenergy, Europe's leader in biofuels. With over 20 years of industry experience, Vallespir's growth strategies have positioned Vertex Bioenergy as the centrepiece of the EU's ongoing strides towards the Green Deal, with Vertex's biofuel emerging as one of the best alternatives for sustainable transport of the future.

ANTONIO VALLESPIR
CEO @ VERTEX Bioenergy

Biofuel is any fuel that is derived from biomass, plant material or animal waste. Since such feedstock material can be replenished, biofuel is considered a source of renewable energy, unlike fossil fuels. The use of biofuel significantly reduces CO₂ emissions compared to gasoline, thus contributing to the improvement of the environment.

Whilst there are many biofuel producers, CEO of Vertex Bioenergy Antonio Vallespir says it is Vertex's "efficiency and flexibility in

the production of ethanol and other co-products" that gives Vertex Bioenergy maximum competitiveness. Vertex Bioenergy has a production capacity at competitive market prices due to the facility's flexibility to use multiple raw materials and to produce multiple products. "The diversity of production," says Vallespir, "puts us in the best position to cover all the demands of Southern Europe and the Med." Vertex Bioenergy is the leading producer and supplier of bioethanol in Spain and France, with Vallespir claiming "[Vertex's] logistics location makes us more than a →



The production of this local biofuel increases European energy security.

on the commodities markets,” he explains. Market fluctuations, political conditions in geographic zones and other factors affecting the company’s activities, both in terms of the acquisition of raw materials and production, are analysed from a global point of view, with the aim of obtaining a better vision of the world market. “This analysis and risk management gives us the opportunity to optimize supplies to different markets,” says Vallespir, who also believes their knowledge of purchasing raw materials has helped set them apart from competitors. →

supplier but also a partner as we are so close to our clients.”

With Vallespir’s career history, it is not surprising that Vertex Bioenergy bests in logistical excellence. Prior to Vertex Bioenergy, Vallespir was the CEO of Abengoa Bioenergy, a similar energy business in St. Louis (US), where he led a company of more than 4,000 professionals with 16 production centres and achieved a turnover of more than 2.5 billion euros. At Abengoa Bioenergy, Vallespir also led the management of the global Hedging and Trading strategy, a strategy he has carried with him to Vertex Bioenergy. “Our raw material purchasing has begun to set us apart [in Europe]; we have a trading company focused



We have the opportunity to decarbonise the transport sector.



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Ecocarburantes Españoles Plant - Vertex Bioenergy

Getting Away from Fossil Fuels

When the mobility sector was impacted by COVID, Vertex Bioenergy was able to rise to the challenge. Vallespir saw the opportunity to diversify Vertex's offerings into the health markets, and looking back, he says, "We played a significant role in producing bioethanol and industrial alcohol by diversifying away from the mobility market." The future of Vertex Bioenergy will continue its diversification, suggests Vallespir, as the CEO looks to reduce the business's dependence on their main product, bioethanol. In fact, Vertex Bioenergy now boasts seven products, a transformation led by Vallespir over the last 3-4 years. Their products now include the increasingly popular DDGS, obtained as a co-product of the bioethanol production process from grains.

Despite being in the business for twenty years, Vallespir sees now as the best opportunity for biofuel. "We have the opportunity to decarbonise the transport sector," he says. "In our opinion, biofuel is a key leverage at the moment, as electric mobility is still not quite ready, and both models will need to be combined until 2050." With the social and political consensus moving away from fossil fuels, an important 'interim' environmental advantage of biofuels, like Vertex's, is that they do not require the development of new distribution infrastructure or vehicles, so the impact of its implementation is minimised. This is comparatively very different from other mobility options like electric vehicles, in which both vehicles and charging infrastructures are new and intensive in the emission of greenhouse gases. "At present, Vertex Bioenergy provides a great opportunity for governments like the EU to cut down on greenhouse gas emissions," explains Vallespir.



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Going green

Today, this is increasingly relevant following the approval of the European Green Deal. This set of policy initiatives by the European Union aims for Europe to become climate neutral in 2050. However, the Green Deal has measures to ensure that nations that are already reliant on fossil fuels are not left behind in the transition to renewable energy, and this is the key opportunity for biofuel.

Vallespir points to Spain as an example, where Vertex's general objective is "to carry out all actions aimed at promoting the use of biofuels that replace gasoline in the mobility sector." Unlike electric, drivers do not have to change their vehicles. However, there have been political challenges in promoting the biofuels. In Spain, paradoxically, the taxation of renewable gasoline is higher than that of gasoline, and much higher than that of other alternative fuels. Vallespir suggests what is needed is "a campaign that explains the reasons for the fuel change and informs drivers about the compatibility of their vehicles."

Positive change

Throughout his career, Vallespir has managed to keep a hawk-eye view on the macro industry and currently serves on several different boards and as a representative for various European industry associations, including The Spanish Association of Bioethanol. During this period, he has also promoted numerous initiatives related to solidarity, environmental preservation and climate action. Vallespir's focus on ESG is also extended through Vertex Bioenergy, who created the Vertex Bioenergy Foundation with the aim of helping sustainable development. Vallespir says that its purpose is "to be the positive drive that helps improve people's lives and provide global solutions to current challenges." As such, Vertex Bioenergy has gone on to plant indigenous trees in Lacq, France and kickstart healthy eating initiatives and projects aiding inclusivity for those suffering from disabilities in its communities.

Significantly as well, Vallespir points to the positive impact of biofuel more generally. "The production of this local biofuel increases European energy security and boosts the rural economy, creating new markets for farmers and jobs in innovative refineries located in rural areas." [🔗](#)



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