

# U.S. CORN

## Food – Feed – Fuel

### Myth

- Using too much corn for ethanol production has created a shortage and caused food prices to go up.

### Reality

- According to a newly-released Congressional Budget Office report (April 2009), higher energy costs had a much greater impact on increased food costs than any suggested corn shortage. In fact, corn used for ethanol had little to do with the increase in food prices, contributing only 0.5 to 0.8 percentage points of the 5.1% overall increase in food prices between April 2007 and April 2008. That estimate is considerably lower than previous estimates.
- U.S. corn growers are the most efficient producers in the world, with record-setting yields year after year. In 2002, the average bushel of corn per acre was 129.3. Five years later, in 2007, yields increased dramatically to 151.1 bushels per acre. That number is projected to jump to 180 bushels per acre in just six more years.
- The above increase in yield could provide an additional 3.8 billion bushels, produced on the same land, by 2015.
- U.S. ethanol producers, through their own innovations, have dramatically improved efficiencies too. We've seen a dramatic increase from 350 gallons of ethanol per acre of corn in 2002 to 435 gallons per acre in 2007.
- Dried Distillers Grains, a high-quality feed co-product of ethanol production, is replacing almost 1 billion bushels of corn in livestock production, lowering the demand for corn and increasing the quality of feed, both here and abroad.

### Myth:

- Growing corn and producing ethanol uses too much water.

### Reality:

- Nearly 9 out of 10 acres of corn require no water other than natural rainfall.
- The water required to produce a gallon of ethanol has declined dramatically.
- No one ever attacks the oil companies for using too much water. Ethanol production requires a fraction of the water required by producing gasoline. In fact, oil production requires nearly 1 billion gallons of water per day.

### **Myth**

- Ethanol is bad for the environment.

### **Reality**

- Compared to what? Oil? In 2008, American-grown ethanol replaced 321 million barrels of oil.
- Ethanol production results in nearly twice as much energy than used in its production – and using ethanol in place of gasoline helps cut greenhouse gas emissions by up to 59%.
- Gasoline, coal, electricity, diesel, natural gas and LP gas ALL have a net energy LOSS. In fact, gasoline requires 1.2 btu's for every btu produced. Corn-based ethanol is the only one of these energy sources that has a net POSITIVE energy ratio.
- Farmers use far less chemicals than they did a decade ago. In fact, they produce 70% more corn per pound of fertilizer than they did 35 years ago.
- A recent study conducted by the bi-partisan Governor's Ethanol Coalition concluded that ethanol poses no threat to surface water or ground water.

### **Myth**

- Cellulosic ethanol should be used instead of corn ethanol.

### **Reality**

- Corn ethanol is here today, being used today, reducing foreign oil dependence today.
- While there is demand for both cellulosic and corn ethanol, billions of dollars still need to be invested to build the infrastructure for cellulosic ethanol; without corn ethanol, it will be very difficult to build a cellulosic industry, especially in a timely manner.

### **The Bottom Line**

- 300,000 hard-working U.S. farmers are growing record amounts of corn.
- Ethanol produced from U.S. corn, using U.S. workers is replacing more foreign oil each year. The production of 9 billion gallons of ethanol in 2008 is equivalent to eliminating 10 months of imported oil from Venezuela.
- Corn based ethanol plants produce \$20 billion in economic activity for taxpayers here in the U.S. – and support or create nearly 500,000 jobs.
- Thousands of U.S. jobs have been created.

## **U.S. Corn**

**Food for the world. Feed for our livestock. Fuel for our cars.**

National Corn Growers Association / [www.ncga.com](http://www.ncga.com)