



February 23, 2005

The Post-Crescent
P.O. Box 59
Appleton, WI 54912

Letter to the editor:

The editorial in the Appleton Post Crescent uses very weak, if not, unsupported claims, opposing the use of ethanol. When the facts are on the table, the benefits of ethanol clearly trump the minor negatives raised by the paper.

It's interesting that the American Lung Association of Wisconsin questions ethanol when neighboring Lung Associations support it. The American Lung Association of Metropolitan Chicago credits ethanol-blended gas with reducing smog-forming emissions. The American Lung Association of Minnesota chapter fully supports the Minnesota E10 program.

U.S. Department of Agriculture and Department of Energy studies all agree ethanol reduces greenhouse gas emissions and agree ethanol reduces use of petroleum fuel. That's a clear benefit.

The USDA states that ethanol results in a net gain in energy, yielding 34% more energy than is used to grow and harvest the grain and process it into ethanol. That's a clear benefit. Using a claim that corn production dumps toxins in the water is plain irresponsible editorializing.

Even if mileage is slightly reduced, which studies show is negligible, less petroleum-based fuel per tankful would be used, and the additional cost would be pennies per tankful. Reducing gas use is a clear benefit.

Job creation has already occurred in Wisconsin with three ethanol plants in operation. That's a clear benefit to the state.

Forty-five percent of the fuel used in the state already contains ethanol. Ethanol already works in half of the fuel and has never been an issue, why not go the rest of the way?

The options are clear: Agriculture's option of cleaner air, energy independence, and renewable fuel option through use of ethanol, or the Appleton Post Crescent's option of dirty air, foreign fuel dependency, and no renewable fuel option through continued reliance on petroleum.

Bill Bruins
President, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation