

Fueling the Future through
Agrofuels: What are the costs?
Who pays? Do we care?

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National Catholic Rural Life Conference

- Who are we?
- What's our connection with energy crops?
- Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
- Community Food Security Coalition
- Building Sustainable Futures for Farmers Globally

Catholic Social Teaching

- Human dignity
- Subsidiarity
- The Common Good
- Integrity of Creation
- Preferential Option for the Poor
- Solidarity
- Universal Destination of Goods

Situation Analysis

- Food Security and the Right to Food
- Farmers and Agricultural Workers' Rights
- Community Economic Development
- Environment

Food Security and the Right to Food

- Food secure -- Everyone has access to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food at all times
- Right to food -- having regular, permanent, and unrestricted access to food through the means to produce or to purchase food that is adequate

Conversion of Food to Fuel is Problematic



Agrofuel Production an Extension of Current Unsustainable System

- Another end product competing with others for same raw commodities
- Competition results in higher food prices
- Increases not realized by farmers
- Expansion of agrofuels production exacerbates the reality

Competition for Land

- Poor suffer the most
- Least able to respond



Food & Land Diverted to Fuel Market



False Promise of 2nd Generation



Impacts on Farmers & Workers



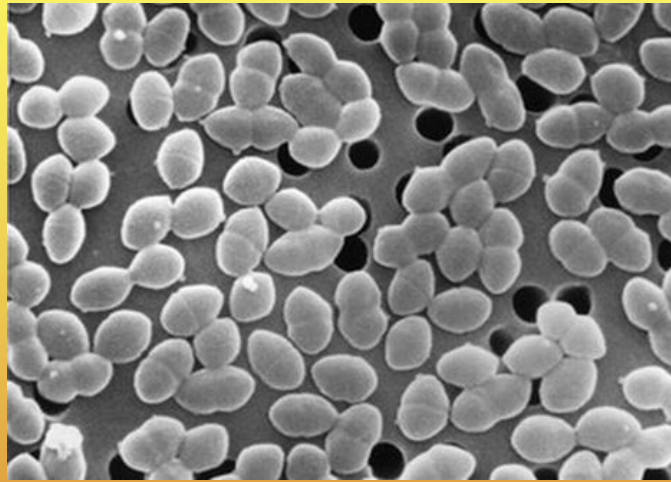
Impacts on Community Economic Development

- Sustainable food system
 - Maximizes community self-reliance
 - Maximizes social justice
- Adapted to local ecology & culture
- Responsive to community needs
- Fosters access to healthy, culturally appropriate food

Environmental Impacts



Environmental Impacts



Vision Sustainable Energy from Farms

We envision a transformation of our **energy system** to a renewable, clean system of wind, agrofuels, solar and other renewable technologies. Agrofuels will be part of this transformation, but only if such production provides a net energy gain, benefits the environment, competes economically, and produces in reasonable quantities – all without reducing food supplies.

Vision -- Ownership, Conservation, Efficiency

- Ownership -- multiple, local helping to ensure that farmers & communities thrive
- Reduce unnecessary use
- Improve efficiency

Farm-Based Sustainable Energy System

- Public good
 - Economically viable
 - Locally owned & managed
 - Ecologically sound
 - Socially responsible
 - Appropriate in scale

Highest Sustainable Use

Criteria for judging sustainable agrofuel production consider ...

- Water quality
- Soil quality
- Wildlife
- Air quality
- Net energy balance
- Diversity

Policy Considerations

- Sustainable Energy Feedstock Strategic Reserve
- Energy Land Reserve
- Conservation Security (Stewardship) Program
- Local Use Block Grants/Bonding Authority
- Support Farmer-Owned Biorefineries
- Support Farmer Capacity Building
- Sustainability Principles & Criteria

Sustainable Energy Feedstock Strategic Reserve

- Non-recourse loan for storable commodities (biomass)
- Farmer Owned Reserve (FOR) for storable commodities (biomass)

Create and Energy Land Reserve

- Establish an acreage reserve for the production of sustainable biomass through CRP
- Harvesting of native perennial grasses
- Reduce soil erosion, water pollution and, perhaps, global warming by reducing land conversion.

Add Biofuels to CSP

- Conservation Security (Stewardship) Program
- Support sustainable agricultural practices, by supporting cultivation of biofuels crops using sustainable practices.
- Create preferences for biofuels in enrollment criteria under CSP.

Block Grants/Bonding Authority

- Support local use of sustainable biofuels and electricity from sustainable biomass.
- Block grants for municipal and school district use of biofuels.
- Augment bonding authority to support sustainable, locally-produced bioenergy.
- Target depressed rural areas

Support Farmer-Owned Biorefineries

- Increase support of farmer-owned biorefineries; using sustainable feedstocks.
- Pay back public subsidies used to help launch farmer cooperatives if bought by outside investors.
- Ensure farmers retain viable ownership and control.
- Ensure fair access by minority farmers.

Capacity Building Support

- Provide support to farmers globally.
- Augment extension service and rural development programs.
- Research production/processing of alternative sustainable biomass crops.
- LDC farmers to grow appropriate sustainable biomass crops and resource processing infrastructure and facilities

Sustainability Principles & Criteria

- Develop sustainability crop production principles and criteria through a democratic, transparent process that could be utilized both domestically and internationally.