

# Biofuels in the News

## Context releases renewable fuels findings

A new white paper just released by The Context Network exposes the impacts of the government's Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA) on agriculture over the next 14 years. The report evaluates three time brackets within that 14-year period and it assesses whether requirements of the law could be met. It also appraises the actual impact in each time period and for specific feedstocks contributing to biofuel production.

Context Network senior consultant Jim Murphy was the principal author of this white paper. "Rather than simply assuming all provisions of EISA would be met, this report is based on our analysis of what volumes of different biofuels will actually be produced and the actual impact on corn, soybean oil, sorghum and cellulosic feedstock, demand, total acres, crop prices and the effect on net returns per acre," Murphy said.

Murphy noted that cornstarch-based ethanol has more potential than some may think, but that biodiesel and cellulosic ethanol face considerable economic challenges.

## Research confirms benefits of high blends

The results of a Minnesota State University-Mankato and University of Minnesota study confirmed what the recent "Optimal Ethanol Blend-Level Investigation" found, that higher blends of ethanol are practical in today's vehicle fleet.

The research unveiled that E20 presents no materials compatibility issues for current vehicles or fuel dispensing equipment.

This corroborates the results of the "optimal blend" study, released in December, which found that blends of ethanol beyond 10 percent perform well in standard, non-flex-fuel vehicles.

That research also found the conventional wisdom about ethanol's BTU-content mileage penalty to be unfounded.

Not only did the ethanol blends of E20 and E30 perform much better than predicted on an energy-content basis, but in three of the four vehicles tested, these mid-range blends actually offered increased fuel economy over straight gasoline.

