

THE BIOFUEL HOAX IS CAUSING A WORLD FOOD CRISIS!

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.med.nutrition/2008-01/msg00150.html>

- *From:* "calderhome@xxxxxxxxx" <calderhome@xxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Wed, 16 Jan 2008 21:29:35 -0800 (PST)
-

<http://home.att.net/~meditation/bio-fuel-hoax.html> – website has reference links!

THE BIOFUEL HOAX IS CAUSING A WORLD FOOD CRISIS!

On December 19th, 2007, President George W. Bush signed into law the Energy Independence and Security Act, which mandates massive increases in the production of ethanol to be used as "biofuel" to run automobiles and trucks. Ethanol is currently made from corn and other foodstuffs, and all the various forms of biofuel, including "biodiesel," are made from food or inedible crops which displace normal agricultural activity. Biofuel crops include corn, sugarcane, cassava, rapeseed, soybeans, palm trees (for palm oil), as well as experimental "second generation" crops such as switchgrass, giant reed, jatropha, hemp, and algae. In 2007, 54% of the world's corn was grown in the USA, and an ever increasing percentage of that crop ended up in gas tanks instead of stomachs. Ethanol production took only 7% of American corn in 1998, but has grown as a cancer on our food supply, taking 37 to 38% by 2007 (reference Fermenting the Food Supply by Stuart Staniford).

The amount of corn required to fill the 18.5 gallon gas tank of a Toyota Camry with ethanol is enough to feed a human being for 270 days. At current levels of biofuel production, this "renewable energy source" has already caused huge increases in the price of food around the world, which can be experienced firsthand at any supermarket in America. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), global food prices rose 40% in the year 2007 alone, producing the highest food cost level on record, and qualifying 2007 as a year of food price hyperinflation! Unfortunately, few consumers/voters understand exactly why food prices have risen so dramatically, and even our most respected politicians do not comprehend the inevitable global food disaster that lies just ahead (see Clinton And Obama On Iran And Biofuels) and which they have created.

The United Nations has officially stated that its charity programs can no longer afford to feed the starving peoples of the

THE BIOFUEL HOAX IS CAUSING A WORLD FOOD CRISIS!

world because of high food costs created by biofuel production. Earlier this year, Jean Ziegler, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, denounced biofuels as "a crime against humanity" and called for a five-year moratorium on their production. Local food banks in the United States are running low on supplies, and many families who use to contribute to food banks are now in need of help themselves. When farmers plant more corn in order to cash in on artificially high prices created by government biofuel mandates, they reduce production of other crops and thus food prices rise across the board. We use corn to feed chickens and cattle, so the price of poultry, eggs, beef, and dairy products has risen substantially and will continue to rise with no end in sight.

The advocacy and use of biofuels is one of the greatest political hoaxes in American history. The ideology of biofuel production sounds wholesome superficially, a kind of green, health food store way of producing energy. The problem is that our current biofuel scheme is based on political and economic selfishness, without legitimate science based ecological justification.

1) Biofuel production starves the poor and reduces our standard of living by dramatically increasing the cost of food, which we all need just to survive. Of course the homeless, the elderly, the disabled, and those living on Social Security and other fixed incomes are the hardest hit. Most Americans do not realize that global food reserves are at historic lows, while proven global oil reserves are at historic highs. The United States alone has vast untouched oil reserves in Alaska, just waiting to be pumped, but our politicians have incredibly decided to trade food and thus human lives for oil instead.

2) Biofuel production increases our Federal budget deficit because it demands large subsidies to exist. Without massive Federal subsidies and political mandates, there would be no significant free market demand for biofuels at all. Ethanol has less energy per gallon than gasoline, so the new ethanol blended fuels will reduce our gas mileage at a time we are all paying record high prices at the pump. Our biofuel schemes are energy socialism gone terribly wrong.

3) Biofuel production harms the environment by needlessly eroding topsoil and encouraging the destruction of forests, which are desperately needed to soak up excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the major greenhouse gas that causes global warming, and the two great sponges of carbon dioxide are the oceans and the forests. The oceans are losing their ability to absorb CO₂ as they are becoming increasingly acidic due to pollution, so if we also destroy our forests global warming will accelerate that much faster. Do we really want to annihilate forests all over the world, from Indonesia to Pennsylvania, just to have more land to grow biofuel crops to burn as fuel in our SUVs? Biofuel schemes speed up global warming because the entire biofuel production process, from beginning to end, releases huge amounts of greenhouse gases into the

THE BIOFUEL HOAX IS CAUSING A WORLD FOOD CRISIS!

atmosphere while destroying native forests which naturally clean and rejuvenate the air we breathe.

Roland Clift, a senior science advisor to the British Government, has stated that British plans to promote ethanol and biodiesel produced from plants is a "scam." On the subject of tropical biodiesel production, Clift states that "Biodiesel is a complete scam because in the tropics the growing demand is causing forests to be burnt to make way for palm trees (to make palm oil) and similar crops. "We calculate that the land will need to grow biodiesel crops for 70 to 300 years to compensate for the CO₂ emitted in forest destruction."

Scientists point out that using nitrogen fertilizers, which are made from natural gas, coal, and mined minerals, generates large amounts of nitrous oxide (N₂O), a greenhouse gas estimated to be 296 times more effective at trapping heat than CO₂. Farming contributes more to global warming than all forms of motorized land, sea, and air transportation combined, so growing vast amounts of crops for biofuel will heat up the earth's atmosphere faster than if we only used imported Saudi Arabian oil. Biofuel crop production also aggravates water shortages because irrigation water is taken away from our shrinking supplies of safe drinking water. Biofuels are a losing proposition on every level, except for the big profits giant agricultural corporations will make producing them.

4) America's "biofuel energy independence plan" is a scientific hoax and an economic fraud because all current American production methods use more energy to create biofuels than they yield in the form of biofuel itself. We have to use large amounts of coal, natural gas, and oil just to manufacture biofuels. Supporters hope that second and third generation biofuel crops will generate more energy than they take to produce, but those schemes have yet to be proven in the real world. Our Congress has decided to mandate first and prove later! Even proposed second and third generation biofuel plants do not eliminate the tremendous environmental damage that massive biofuel production will cause. At the recent Conference on Climate Change held in Bali, several studies were presented detailing the dangers of making automobile fuels from crops. Respected scientists warned that biofuel production is destructive to the environment and will not give us the clean "renewable energy" its advocates claim. Just a few days after the Bali conference ended, America's political leaders enacted a new law mandating massive increases in biofuel production, the science and the facts be damned.

5) The biofuel hoax was created to a large degree by domestic American politics and corporate greed. Both the Democratic and Republican Parties want to get the "farm vote" in politically strategic states like Iowa, Ohio, and Nebraska. Our leaders have put political gain ahead of the world's starving poor, the elderly on fixed incomes, and the welfare of the American middle class. Rich

THE BIOFUEL HOAX IS CAUSING A WORLD FOOD CRISIS!

politicians can afford to pay the dramatically higher food bills that biofuel production creates, and they have decided to throw science to the wind and charge blindly into what will inevitably be branded as one of the most destructive political fiascoes of the 21st century. Ambitious young biofuel entrepreneurs and giant agricultural corporations smell the money to be made, and have lobbied Congress and President Bush in hopes of turning the farm belt into the Saudi Arabia of "renewable energy," even if the energy they supply comes at the cost of human starvation and accelerated environmental damage.

6) Making cellulosic ethanol from lignocellulose, a structural material that comprises much of the mass of plants, is better than making ethanol from corn, but still has most of the drawbacks of ethanol made from food crops. Growing lignocellulose yielding grasses on land we currently use to graze cattle will increase the price of beef and milk. We will still have to use fertilizers made from natural gas and coal to make inedible crops grow, and the entire process will erode topsoil and increase the price of food.

If we grow switchgrass on "marginal" prairie land, we will soon turn that marginal land into a dust bowl, which it may turn into anyway due to global warming, which biofuel use will not stop. Computer models for the progression of global warming show the America Midwest and Southwest getting hotter and dryer, with much of our farm and grazing land turning into desert. We know that biofuel use will do nothing to stop this progression, so why are we pinning so much hope on an environmental battle plan that any fool can see will blow up in our face over time? We won't be able to produce enough biofuels to run our cars, or enough food to fill our bellies! The biofuel scheme is another example of a basic lack of intelligence of our politicians, many of whom also voted for the disastrous Iraq War despite the warnings of more thoughtful advisers. If you cannot plan ahead and anticipate future trends, then you will lead this nation into one disaster after another, and that is exactly what is happening in Washington DC at this very moment. Our Congress has become a chorus of stupidity, and our politicians are leading us to national suicide, not to the nirvana of energy independence.

The very process of making cellulosic ethanol from switchgrass and other plants has not been proven to be economically viable, and the Bush energy bill assumes new scientific breakthroughs that have not yet occurred. Many of the plants being proposed as lignocellulose yielding crops are weeds which will have a destructive impact on wildlife and biodiversity around the world. In practical terms, there is not enough usable land area to grow a sufficient quantity of biofuel plants to meet the world's energy demands. "The biofuel potential of the entire human food supply is quite a small amount of energy compared to the global oil supply – somewhere between 15 to 20% on a volumetric basis, so 10 to 15% on an energy basis." – Quote from Stuart Staniford in *Fermenting the Food Supply*.

THE BIOFUEL HOAX IS CAUSING A WORLD FOOD CRISIS!

The prospect of growing algae to make biodiesel has much more positive potential than making ethanol from switchgrass, but large open algae sewage ponds are difficult to manage due to contamination from invasive algae and bacteria, and the inherent problem of finding an algae that will survive wide swings in temperature and pH. If an algae based biofuel system can be developed that uses only a small amount of land, and produces much more energy than it takes to manufacture, then algae biodiesel production might be a positive venture that we all can support. To date there has been no proof that such a system is viable or truly carbon neutral. If you have to run algae farms off the waste of coal fired power plants, as has been proposed, then you have a band-aid solution that will not stop global warming in its tracks, which is what we need to do if we want our children to survive on this planet. Algae biofuel production deserves research funding, but any biofuel manufacturing process should be tested and proven environmentally safe and food supply friendly by scientists with no vested economic or political interest in the matter before being mandated by law.

Dramatic increases in food prices created by biofuel production will cause political instability around the globe, because food products are sold in a world wide marketplace just like oil. There have already been mass public protests and food riots in Mexico, Morocco, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Senegal and Indonesia over the high price of basic staple foods. Imagine the political instability in Central and South America, Africa, India, and Pakistan that runaway food price inflation will cause. Will a starving Pakistan, armed with nuclear weapons, make the world a safer place? If American politicians lead us down a path to global use of biofuels, we will be leading the world into a historic disaster that can easily kill more people due to starvation than have been killed in the Iraq War by bullets and bombs.

If we truly wish to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we will have to create an infrastructure based on nuclear energy, improved electric car battery technology, and hydrogen fuel, not on biofuels. Hydrogen releases water vapor when burned, and is the cleanest burning fuel known to man. Hydrogen can be used in both internal combustion engines and in fuel cells. Hydrogen fuel can be made through the electrolysis of water via electricity generated from zero emissions nuclear power plants, which currently produce about 19.4% of our nation's electricity. We need to build large numbers of nuclear power plants now using mass production techniques if we want to end global warming. Otherwise, we will just continue talking endlessly about the subject with no positive effect.

Nuclear power plants do not contribute to global warming because they release no greenhouse gases at all. You do not need much land to build a nuclear power plant, and you do not need to make fertilizer to make nuclear energy grow. Nuclear power plants are not vulnerable to attack by viruses, bacteria, fungi, insects, or competing weeds, as

THE BIOFUEL HOAX IS CAUSING A WORLD FOOD CRISIS!

are biofuel crops. We need to get off the organic carbon cycle for energy production and use inorganic nuclear power to produce the highly concentrated energy supply that solar and wind power can never hope to provide. Even by the most optimistic estimates, solar and wind power can only hope to satisfy perhaps 20% of our future energy needs. Solar and wind power tap into natural energy sources that are far too diffuse to be collected on a large enough scale to power an advanced, industrialized nation. Solar and wind power currently produce only about 2.4% of our nation's electricity, so even an increase to 20% would be a major undertaking.

One of the added benefits of nuclear power is that we already own huge amounts of nuclear fuel in the form of nuclear weapons materials, which can be converted into fuel rods for civilian power production. The United States Government has hundreds of years worth of nuclear fuel in storage thanks to the Cold War nuclear arms race of the 1950s and 1960s. We can turn our swords into plowshares while paying only the modest costs of converting high level weapons grade materials into lower level fuel rods suitable for power production. Unlike oil, we do not have to import nuclear fuel from foreign countries or fight endless foreign wars to protect our supplies. We have the fuel and it's already paid for!

Nuclear fuel rods can be reprocessed over and over again because only a tiny portion of the nuclear material is actually used up during each fuel cycle. When you reprocess fuel rods there is very little high level nuclear waste that needs to be stored. The nuclear "waste" is simply reused as nuclear fuel, and that is part of the reason why France's nuclear power program has been so successful. France relies heavily on nuclear power plants and nuclear fuel reprocessing, and thus France has the cleanest air and lowest electricity rates in Europe.

The fears many Americans have about civilian nuclear power plants are largely unfounded. Our latest nuclear reactor designs are carefully engineered with many layers of redundant safety and security features built-in. One single disaster that occurred at an obsolete Ukrainian reactor is no reason to be eternally afraid of all nuclear power plants across the board. The old Chernobyl reactor used a dangerous design that has never been used in the West, and which did not even have a containment vessel. The 1986 Chernobyl accident was caused by Soviet engineers conducting wildly irresponsible experiments that were totally unrelated to normal civilian power production, and which would never be allowed in the USA. The Chernobyl accident killed a total of 56 people, a great tragedy, but not a nation killing disaster. Far fewer people died at Chernobyl than on Japan Airlines Flight 123 in 1985, when a lone 747 jetliner crashed and killed all 520 passengers. Americans suffer over 40,000 deaths due to automobile accidents every year, yet there is no great human cry to ban automobiles.

THE BIOFUEL HOAX IS CAUSING A WORLD FOOD CRISIS!

Nuclear power plants in America have an excellent record for safety and for clean, pollution free operation. By contrast, the over 600 coal burning power plants which produce approximately 49% of our nation's electricity emit sulfur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen, which combine with moisture in the atmosphere to form destructive acid rain. America's coal burning power plants release approximately 200,000 pounds of toxic mercury every year, and an enormous skyward bound river of carbon dioxide gas which represents nearly 10% of all CO₂ emissions worldwide. A single 1,000 megawatt coal burning power plant can release as much as 12.8 tons of thorium and 5.2 tons of uranium every year, both radioactive metals which naturally occur in coal. The uranium figure includes 74 pounds of uranium-235, the highly fissionable form of uranium used to make atomic bombs. Coal burning power plants also release microscopic particulate matter which clogs the lungs and is attributed to causing approximately 24,000 unnatural premature deaths in the United States every year, which is 428 times the Chernobyl death toll.

Why is there so little fear of coal burning power plants, but so much hysterical fear of much safer and healthier nuclear power? The answer is that nuclear power has been unfairly demonized by a Hollywood entertainment industry trying to make a quick buck (The China Syndrome, The Simpsons, etc.), and by scientifically undereducated politicians and environmental activists. There has never been a single death attributed to American nuclear power plants, which produce electricity at an average cost of less than 3 cents per kilowatt-hour (latest 2008 estimate), a rate comparable to hydroelectric power and less than natural gas or coal. The cost of coal power is even more expensive if you figure in damage to buildings due to acid rain and other air pollutants, and increased human health costs: the monetary value of 24,000 human lives plus those who are simply made ill.

Building newer, more efficient standardized nuclear power plant designs using mass production techniques for major structural and control components will bring the cost down even further. For the total US cost of the Iraq War, estimated to be well over 2,000 billion dollars (2 trillion), we could have built at least 500 1,600 megawatt nuclear power plants, outputting 800,000 megawatts total. That would have given us virtual energy independence, almost doubling our current national electric generating capacity of 906,155 megawatts (peak capacity for 2006).

Nuclear power is the only technology that can produce an extremely high volume of energy using only a tiny amount of land and at reasonable cost, all without emitting any greenhouse gases. That is why the father of Gaia theory, British atmospheric scientist James Lovelock, stated that nuclear power is the only way to have a large human population on planet earth without causing global warming and destroying the environment. Please read James Lovelock's public statement on nuclear energy, Nuclear power is the only green solution,

THE BIOFUEL HOAX IS CAUSING A WORLD FOOD CRISIS!

at: <http://www.ecolo.org/media/articles/articles.in.english/love-indep-24-05-04.htm>

The economic benefits of a nuclear based, hydrogen fueled economy are spectacular, and the United States foreign trade deficit and Federal budget deficit can be greatly reduced. All of the nuclear reactors will be built and run by Americans in America, who will make high wages and pay taxes to Federal, state, and local governments, and spend their income at local American stores. As the USA currently imports over 60% of its oil supply, all of the dollars we now ship off to Canada (18%), Mexico (15%), Saudi Arabia (14%), Nigeria (12%), Venezuela (10%), and Angola (6%) will stay right here in the USA. In the year 2007, the USA is estimated to have imported a total of about 3.8 billion barrels of crude oil in addition to a tremendous amount of natural gas and other hydrocarbon products which can largely be replaced by nuclear power. At \$93. a barrel (12/24/07 price), 3.8 billion barrels of crude oil is worth over 353. billion dollars. A nuclear based hydrogen economy will make the United States richer in addition to saving us from desertification of our heartland, increased storm damage, coastal flooding, and world wide starvation caused by the deadly combination of global warming and massive, government mandated biofuel production.

Hydrogen fuel produced by nuclear energy will be expensive at first, but the price will decline over time as the infrastructure grows and economies of scale lower production costs. Electric car battery technology is constantly improving and will allow Americans to drive our highways without guilt that they are burning up precious natural resources or polluting the environment. If you modify a Toyota Prius by giving it a hydrogen capable gas tank, slightly alter its internal combustion engine so that it can run on hydrogen gas, and rewire its electrical system so that its batteries can be plugged into a charging station, then you have an excellent hydrogen-electric hybrid automobile right now. The nuclear based hydrogen economy is achievable with current technology and is a long term investment in America's future that will pay increasingly larger dividends every year. [also see General Motor's prototype hydrogen fuel cell vehicle]

If we wish a fast, short term fix to rising oil prices, then drilling in the Alaska ANWR oil reserve will do far less environmental damage than plunging ahead with biofuel production. Scientific studies show that drilling at ANWR with modern, low land use techniques will have a minuscule, inconsequential impact on vegetation and wildlife. Opposition to ANWR drilling represents emotional symbolism, not good science or responsible national energy policy. Using Alaskan oil will create new American jobs, reduce the Federal budget and foreign trade deficits, and help lower food prices. One positive idea would be to use Federal revenues from sale of the ANWR reserves to help fund the switchover to a national nuclear-hydrogen infrastructure.

THE BIOFUEL HOAX IS CAUSING A WORLD FOOD CRISIS!

If you do not want food prices to double, triple, or even quadruple in the next ten years, then write your political representatives and tell them that you do not want to waste food production resources on biofuels. State the obvious fact that food prices are already too high and that you want all biofuel mandates and manufacturing subsidies ended. If this is done you will soon see food prices declining instead of rising, your local food banks will become full again, and the United Nations and other charitable organizations will be able to meet their moral obligations to help feed the world's starving masses. With a world wide human population of over 6.6 billion people and growing, we cannot afford to feed our families and at the same time use precious farm and grazing land to produce biofuels.

On December 19th, 2007, when the United States Congress voted for massive increases in biofuel production during a time of worldwide food price hyperinflation, the message they gave the low income people of the world was very clear; LET THEM EAT BIOFUEL! Is the unintentional starvation inflicted on the world by thoughtless American politicians any more morally excusable than the intentional starvation of innocent civilians ordered by infamous dictators during times of war?

Christopher Calder

<http://home.att.net/~meditation/bio-fuel-hoax.html>

..
.