

Publications explain

ethanol

NEWARK, Del. — Not too long ago it was easy to spot fuel pumps selling "gasohol," a mixture of gasoline and ethanol alcohol distilled from grains. The pumps usually pictured a fat ear of corn.

Those specially marked pumps have almost disappeared, but ethanol is still being used as a petroleum extender and octane enhancer, says University of Delaware Extension agricultural engineer Tom Williams. Major gasoline producers are selling premium unleaded gasoline that is 10 percent ethanol.

Williams says area farmers should consider ethanol as an alternative market for their corn. This would not interfere with food production, he says, since corn surpluses exist, and since ethanol can even be made from spoiled crops.

One bushel of corn yields 2.6 gallons of ethanol under well managed conditions. The U.S. can generate enough surplus grain to provide 8.5 billion gallons of ethanol each year, Williams says. That's equivalent to about eight percent of our nation's total gasoline use at current consumption levels.

Ethanol can reduce our dependence on foreign oil. And unlike oil, it is a renewable resource.

Williams does not advocate on-farm ethanol production for most farmers, because the last step in the production process, removing water from the alcohol, is impractical on a small scale. However, farmers may want to consider selling part of their crop to a commercial distiller.

A publication entitled Facts About Ethanol is available from the USDA National Agricultural Library, Room 111, Beltsville, MD 20725. The publication is free while supplies last.

In addition, a free publication explaining ethanol production is available from Extension agricultural engineer Tom Williams, Agricultural Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19711.

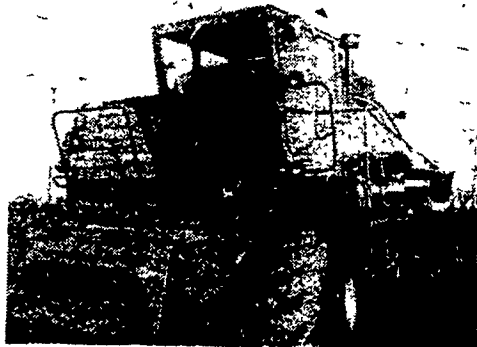


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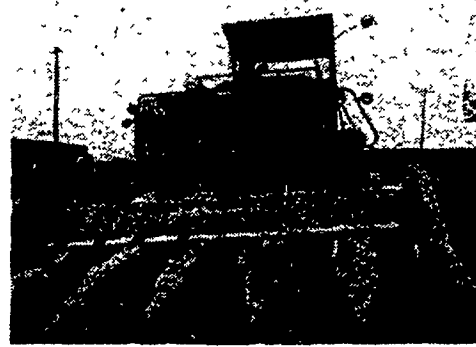


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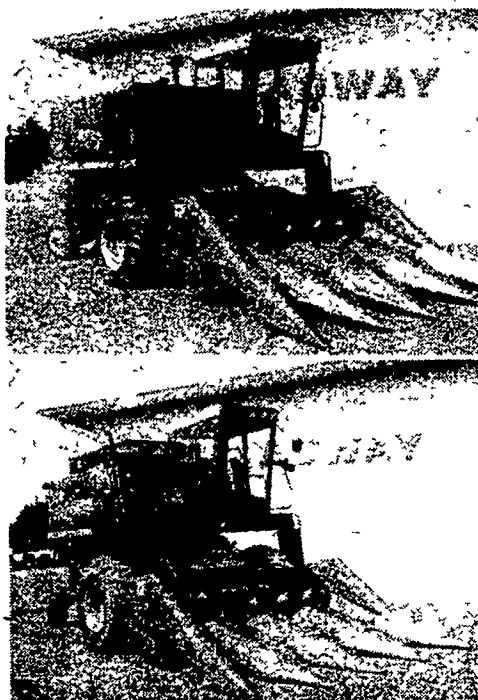
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