

PRESS RELEASE

FlexFuel Vehicle Awareness Effort to be Focus of New USDA Grant

Lincoln, NE- November 10, 2011: A new grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be used to promote flex fuel vehicles, flex fuel pumps, and driver education. The grant was announced at a meeting of the Nebraska Ethanol Board today.

The Nebraska Ethanol Industry Coalition (NEIC), a non-profit educational organization, will be working with the FlexFuel Vehicle Awareness Campaign to institute a wide range of activities aimed at increasing ethanol use in order to meet the national renewable fuel standard. Project partners include the Nebraska Ethanol Board, the Nebraska Corn Board, the Clean Fuels Foundation, ICM, Poet Ethanol Products, Monsanto, Green Plains Renewable Energy, and Phibro Ethanol Performance Group.

While the FFV Awareness Campaign is an ongoing national effort, this project will concentrate on six states: Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Georgia and Florida. Key elements of the project include working with state motor vehicle departments to inform drivers that they may already have a flex fuel vehicle and how FFV drivers can easily find fueling sites offering high-level ethanol blends. The campaign will also provide an opportunity to educate all drivers on ethanol with respect to performance, emissions, and advantages it provides over gasoline and imported oil.

Todd Sneller, Chairman of the Clean Fuels Development Coalition and Administrator of the Nebraska Ethanol Board, said the project reflects a unique "virtual pipeline" that targets production states like Nebraska, Iowa and Kansas and links them with key markets like Maryland, Georgia, and Florida. "Clearly we are near the saturation point in terms of ethanol blends in conventional vehicles," said Sneller. "To maintain the renewable fuel standard and move to the next level we need to take advantage of the 9 million FFVs on the road today that can use high level ethanol blends, ranging up to E85. For that to happen drivers need to know their vehicles have this capability and where to find the fuel," he said.

According to project participants, consumers can check their owners' manual, gas caps, and check their vehicle identification numbers at several websites to find out if they have a FFV. Even for those who do not, the inquiry often leads to interest in the subject and an increase in FFV inquiries to auto dealers. FFV Awareness Campaign officials are currently in discussions with several state motor vehicle administrators. They say that reaching drivers through current state communication channels like emission notices and registration renewals would be an extremely efficient means of reaching both current and prospective FFV owners.

The USDA grant was issued under the Rural Business Opportunity Grant program. The project will also focus on rural areas that can adopt ethanol as a business opportunity through flex fuel pumps and retail outlets. "The importance of ethanol production to rural America cannot be overstated," said Sneller. "Distributing and using the fuel in smaller communities adds to the total value of this important domestic product."

Sneller added, "This is a significant project in scope and size and has the potential to yield substantial results. We look forward to working with all the project partners who have provided financial and human resources to this effort and we anticipate adding more partners as the project progresses."

Additional partners include the Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board, Protec Fuels, Bossleman Energy Services, and Lampert Consulting.

For further information on the project contact:
Douglas Durante , Clean Fuels Development Coalition, 301-718-0077
Todd Sneller, Nebraska Ethanol Board, 402-471-2941
Burl Haigwood, FFV Awareness Campaign, 202-441-2400