“Corn should be a food, not a fuel…”

Use Natural Gas as a Transportation Fuel…..

Corn, Ethanol, Corn subsidy, Natural Gas

By: Shraddha Desai, Evan Lampert

Abstract:
(Shraddha Desai)

Consumption of corn by humans and animals is increasing day by day through the big variety of food products. We also use corn directly or indirectly in various other products. The gasoline we use to fill up car tanks has 10% ethanol in it and that ethanol is refined from the corn. Because corn is the only crop which is available easily with cheapest price, whereas other crops such as wheat, rice, soybeans are more expensive than corn and it will be also more expensive to refine to make ethanol. Switching to ethanol from MTBE (methyl tert butyl ether) occurred because MTBE is really carcinogenic and dangerous to human health. Ethanol was really found to be energy conserver. But the process of refining corn to make ethanol for gasoline itself takes more energy than the energy we are trying to conserve from the use of ethanol. However to produce more ethanol for gasoline, we need more corn, and to increase the production of corn crop government has started a subsidy program in which government pays farmers to grow more corn. The money government use to pay farmers as this subsidy programs that money government collected in tax. Indirectly subsidy program runs on tax payers’ money and that amount is in billions of dollars. For better environmental prospect we should change fueling system to natural gas from gasoline. This will also help our government to overcome from this critical financial situation by stop subsiding crops and mainly corn. Since government itself needs subsidy money than they pay it to the farmers for more production of corn to make more ethanol to more usage of gasoline.

Video:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQK8zeKpNVs
Little History of Corn:
(Shraddha Desai)

Corn is an important grain around the world. First, corn was found in Puebla, Mexico around 5000 BC and later it spread throughout North and South America. There are different kinds of corn such as field corn, Indian corn, popcorn, blue corn, sweet corn, and white corn. Native Indians used corn for food and trading. Around the world, different countries had corn by the 1550s. It has changed through the process of natural selection and plant breeding. Corn grows best in the warm days of summer.

Today corn is grown almost everywhere; still United States is the largest producer of corn worldwide. Corn is also the main crop produced by GE technologies (Genetically engineered Food) in US almost everywhere. Maybe that’s why corn is the cheapest crop produced in the U.S than other crops. Now since corn is the cheapest crop in US it’s being use in mostly each and every single product and it has increase the consumption of corn every year. Moreover, it is cheaper to use corn in other products than any other expensive food crop. Moreover, this all make prices of food go high as well as with the products in which corn is being use in very high amount.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Harvested Area in million acres</th>
<th>Cash receipts from sales ($ billions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corn</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soybeans</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: US farmers produce about ~ $100 billion worth of crops and ~ $100 billion worth of livestock each year. This table was taken from the US EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) website. This data represents the major agricultural crops of US produced in 2000. According to USEPA data from 2000, ~ 400,000 US farms crown in grown. And its increasing every year since now we have developed GE technology and most of the corn is produced by is from the GE technology.

According to the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA), ~ 12 % of US corn crop ends up in foods directly as corn, corn chips and also indirectly as fructose corn syrup. ~ 10 % corn crop is consumed by domestic and overseas livestock, poultry and fish production (Data belongs to USEPA, in 2000). A wide selection of industrial uses corn in ethanol, a popular oxygenate in cleaner burning auto fuels.
**Demand of corn throughout the whole world:**
(Shraddha Desai)

In addition to the productions and consumption of corn, percent numbers of consumption are increasing every year so quickly. Plus, we are also exporting corn in different countries in where corn is grown in minimal amount. According to the news from the Wall Street Journal, the US will export ~ 2 million metric tons of corn to China after September, 2011. According to the news from the Wall Street Journal, the U.S. will export ~2 million metric tons of corn to China after September 2011. Last export of corn to China, it has increased vigorously from 500,000 tons to ~ 2 million metric tons. The export of corn into different countries in such a high quantity can make a very large effect on the US corn industry and US food industry, importantly for those products which are mainly dependent on corn or refined from the corn such as ethanol for gasoline.

Exports of corn in millions of tons to unknown destinations can and will slowly increase the prices of the U.S. food industry because ~95% of food products in grocery stores like ShopRite and Stop & Shop contain food products which are made from corn directly or indirectly. I gathered some food items such as potato chips, peanut butter, popcorns, cream of mushroom soup, etc. in which corn is used directly. In such items like corn syrup, lemonade, honey wheat bread, ketchup, sweet pickles, soft drinks (coke, sprite and more) etc. corn is used as high or regular fructose corn syrup. High production of food products are made or refined from the corn. Plus, different grocery stores do make them in their store brands for to increase their brands revenue, and they also have that stuff on the sale with the regular brand items. Sale in grocery stores leads to the more consumption of the product in that particular amount of time. The grocery stores also do sell the corn oil in different brands such as canola corn oil, ShopRite corn oil, etc. Moreover, corn oil is also in margarine, butter.

**Usage of Corn in percentages by all the living organisms:**
(Shraddha Desai)

Corn is everywhere, and in everything. Corn is used in food processor, and cattle feeding states. Corn is used as a feeding product to chickens while also being used in sweeteners in sodas for the vitamins. This range is really huge. Corn is used as food for humans and animals. In the US, ~ 30-40 % of the corn grown is used by animals. Other 25-35 % of the corn grown is used ethanol in gasoline. And remaining other percent of the corn grown is used for other things like plastics, medicines (aspirin, vitamins), sweeteners, and ~ 3000 other things. Also, corn is also used in tires, plastics in the cars and also in the paint.

**Refining Process of ethanol from corn:**
(Evan Lampert)

As stated above, we use corn for numerous goods. This is mainly because corn is a mass produced crop that can be grown almost anywhere. A controversial good that is made from corn
is ethanol. Over one billion bushels of corn go through the refining process and create two and half billion gallons of ethanol. Fuel ethanol is a unique type of ethanol because it has been highly concentrated which removes all of the water in it. Then it is blended with other compounds which makes the alcohol an undrinkable product. An intriguing fact about fuel ethanol is that it doesn’t have to be added or blended into gasoline to be used as a fuel. Fuel ethanol has the ability to fuel cars without any gasoline involved. This method of using just the fuel ethanol can be found in the Indy Racing League, where race cars drive hundreds of laps around a track. Although fuel ethanol doesn’t have to be blended with gasoline to work, it usually is. Most cars today use a mixture of 90% gasoline and 10% ethanol. There are certain cars though those have the ability to use a 15% mixture of gasoline and an 85% mixture of ethanol. The main reason why ethanol is used for fuel is because it makes the U.S. a little less dependent on foreign imports of fuel, because if we are making a fuel (ethanol) out of corn in our own country, then we do not have to import as much fuel from other countries around the world. Also, it is added with gasoline in cars as fuel because it makes the burning of the gasoline a little more eco-friendly; since the ethanol oxygenates the gasoline and lets it burn completely.

Use of Ethanol in Gasoline instead of MTBE:
(Evan Lampert)

The use of ethanol being added to gasoline for fuel is a very modern idea though. Back in the 1990’s, the U.S. government enforced amendments to the Clean Air Act. This Act required that gasoline be oxygenated (at least 2.0 %) so that it is more eco-friendly and burns more completely in combustion. The main oxygenate of this time was called methyl tert-butyl ether; more commonly known as MTBE.

MTBE was a considerable choice because it was inexpensive and helped mixers generate higher octane ratings. MTBE was thought of as the solution to the problem of keeping our environment clean until 1995. During this year California was making discoveries that there was a high level of MTBE showing up in their drinking water. This caused a lot of problems so another solution was created, and that was ethanol. Many people thought of ethanol as a much safer replacement to MTBE, and ethanol was pushed hard by the agricultural industry in the U.S.
How ethanol is actually made:
(Evan Lampert)

1. Today's commercial ethanol production begins by grinding corn kernels into a powder.
2. It is then heated and liquefied into a starchy “mash.”
3. Enzymes break down the “mash” into fermentable sugars.
4. Yeast is added to ferment the sugars to ethanol.

Water + 10% Alcohol + Heat = Distilled alcohol + 2-5% gasoline “denaturant”

solid residue, distillers grains, is a byproduct used for livestock feed.

-This diagram shows how ethanol is made. Starting from the ear of corn that is grinded into a powder, heated and liquefied into a starchy “mash”, then fermented into sugars which yeast is then added to ferment the sugars into ethanol.

Is Ethanol good to use in gasoline?
(Evan Lampert)

Corn is not the only crop that can refined into ethanol, so this is where the controversy begins. After corn is harvested by farmers around the country, it goes through a very costly and intense process in which it is turned into an ethanol that can be sold. The positives of using ethanol in fuel are that it does lessen the burden on our country to import fuels which does create a sense of “energy security”. This will also “help farmers, reduce oil imports, and stimulate the American economy.” This may sound great on paper, but in reality “the ethanol boosters are ignoring some unpleasant facts: Ethanol won't significantly reduce our oil imports; adding more ethanol to our gas tanks adds further complexity to our motor-fuel supply chain, which will lead to further price hikes at the pump; and, most important (and most astonishing), it may take more energy to produce a gallon of ethanol than it actually contains.”
“Adding more ethanol will also increase the complexity of America's refining infrastructure, which is already straining to meet demand, thus raising pump prices. Ethanol must be blended with gasoline. But ethanol absorbs water. Gasoline doesn't. Therefore, ethanol cannot be shipped by regular petroleum pipelines. Instead, it must be segregated from other motor fuels and shipped by truck, rail car, or barge. Those shipping methods are far more expensive than pipelines. There's a final point to be raised about ethanol: It contains only about two-thirds as much energy as gasoline. Thus, when it gets blended with regular gasoline, it lowers the heat content of the fuel. So, while a gallon of ethanol-blended gas may cost the same as regular gasoline, it won't take you as far.”

With the amount of corn that we are going to be exporting to China next year, over four times as much as usual, this means that EVERYTHING is going to go up in cost. Any livestock goods will increase because of the amount of money it is going to cost farmers to feed their livestock. Remember that livestock is primarily raised on a heavy corn based diet. Shipping those foods is going to increase in price because ethanol will rise in price because it is refined from corn. Any food with corn as an ingredient will increase in price and so on and so on.

-1 gallon of gas =1.5 gallons of ethanol

**What is Subsidy?**
(Shraddha Desai)

Subsidy means that the government pays farmers to grow the crop for which government has asked for, and the money government pay to the farmers, comes from the tax payers’ money. Now, subsidies have been accepted in few countries, including US. Subsidies are well-known as agricultural or undeveloped subsidies, where the funds are paid by the government to the farmers. Furthermore, in farming business it encourages the production of some definite agricultural products as well as it also gives the control to the general agricultural prices in farming business. High percent of agricultural subsidies go to the farmers for crops such as corn, wheat, cotton, rice, soybean, peanuts, etc. Subsidy program frequently deal with the farmers to grow these crops as high amount of production, as they can generate. In US, corn is the top crop for subsidy payments. Subsidies are especially controversial in the US, where a greater part of the subsidies go to grain producers.

**When and how subsidy program started?**
(Shraddha Desai)

Most farms and agricultural subsidy programs started in the late 1960s-1970s, and in some countries it started in early 1900s. In US, farm subsidizing began in somewhere 1930s through the Agricultural Adjustment Act, and it gain success in late 1940s. Subsidy programs were created by the Unites States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to help farms and also to the smaller agricultural business so that they can grow their business, also they can increase the productions of the crop in which government is mainly interested.
Pros and Cons of Subsidy Programs:
(Shraddha Desai)

*In Pros:* - This program was created by USDA to help farms and smaller agricultural business to grow crops, which will also lead the positive money impact on their families. At other point, this program has been helping the environment by giving a break to the land and letting it restore it soils back. Most important part is that, in the subsidy program government pays to the farmers to grow for particular crop for which government has asked for. Subsidizing amount depends heavily on the market price of the crops and also other issues. At last, these farm subsidies also have benefits in stabilizing the agricultural development of its nation.

*In Cons:* - The funding for the farm subsidies really relies on the taxes that government collects from the people, like we, us. Some economists argue that farm subsidies lead to overproduction of the crops and the money can be spend on improving and protecting nation’s economy and domestic industries. Another most frequent problem is that farm subsidies end up paying large corporations, which needs slighter help from economy, rather than actual farms that are already struggling economically. One required question is that, why farms should be subsidized by the tax payers’ money while other industries should have been subsidized instead of it?

Corn subsidizing for ethanol:
(Evan Lampert)

The corn subsidy in US plays a big role over the production and consumption of corn. First, corn subsidy means that the government pays farmers to grow more corn because it is used in many ways, especially for energy. Our major concern for our country is to produce enough energy for our nation, and ethanol is the current solution to conserve energy. The gasoline we use to fill up our car tanks contain 10% ethanol in it, which is refined from the corn. More and more use of gasoline day by day increases so rapidly that to produce enough gasoline and enough ethanol we need really good amount of production of corn. Corn is the only crop use in this refining process to make ethanol, since corn is the cheapest crop in US. It’s being grown by regular farming, GE technologies and now with subsidy programs too. In addition to the process of refining corn, it takes more energy to refine the corn to make ethanol than the energy we want to save from the use of ethanol. Plus, somewhere in an article I read that we use ~ 25 bushels of corn to refine it to make only 1 gallon of ethanol. So, little quantity of ethanol is produced by consuming ~ 25 bushels of corn throughout this refining process. It’s too much amount of corn we are using. So, to keep producing more and more amounts of corn government is paying to the farmers, because by any reason if the more production of corn is not possible, then we will have to tolerate it from all the ways. Mainly from the gasoline side, the price of gasoline will go too high that half majority of people can’t afford to pay. The prices for the food products as well as other products in which corn is in use high amount, and which products are really mandatory for humans such as clothes, paints, plastics.
Corn subsidies = More Obese Americans… Why it should get eliminate?
(Shraddha Desai)

Based on United States Drugs Association (USDA)’s new report, the US government is spending tax payers’ billions of dollars in subsidizing such food products that increases obesity and various health problems. On other hand, government spends only a portion of money on healthy food subsidies. The another main reason for eliminating corn subsidies is that corn subsidies have led us to lots of cheap and low-quality foods, especially the food which is made to corn chips to fructose corn syrup to the sodas with sugar added in highly amount. Most importantly, these all food products are most likely to be liked by teenagers, kids, collegians and consumed in very high amount. In US we subsidize cheap junk foods filled with empty calories from fructose corn syrup which works as a sugar. Plus, these all junk foods contain real nutrition in very low quantity. Obesity in kids is also a major problem and big issue after governments’ money in corn subsidies.

Elimination of Corn Subsidies
(Shraddha Desai)

In a result to two major problems of corn subsidies - 1.Governments’ moneys and 2.Obesity and unhealthy nutrition in people, has now brought to its end soon. There was an article in Wall Street Journal about corn subsidy that it’s now going to be end soon. We want to save our money and help our nation in a problem in which at least we can have a guarantee that it will bring us back with positive reply.

Solutions: switch it to natural gas from gasoline & Benefits from it:
(Shraddha Desai, Evan Lampert)

⇒ In my opinion, the solution is that to switch gasoline with natural gas. It will decrease the consumption of corn in very high quantity of billions of tons. Then, the more corn will be available for humans and animals. We can also help the poorer nation by exporting corn in lower price than we were used to. Plus, this solution may also affect the prices for corn products in long terms. More than it affects the prices of corn; it may also help in reduce to use of corn in food products.

⇒ Most importantly, switching to natural gas will also help corn subsidies to stop, and mainly for ethanol. The government pays farmers to grow more corn because it is used in so many ways, especially for energy. By stopping using corn for ethanol to use for fuel, this means that billions of dollars of tax payers’ moneys would be saved because the government wouldn’t have to pay farmers to grow extra corn for ethanol.

⇒ Natural gas costs about $0.60-$2.70 per gallon, and this is because natural gas is very plentiful and the demand for natural gas is so low. This low demand of natural gas makes itself virtually “free” for human consumption.
- This picture gives the complete summary in very depth on the issue we are presenting.
**Natural Gas – what is it?**
(Shraddha Desai)

Natural gas is made up of two chemical elements, which are hydrogen and carbons. That’s why the gas of this mixture is call hydrocarbon gas. This chemical also includes oil and gasoline in it. Along with methane, this gas also includes ethane, propane, butane and pentane. This composition of the natural gas is very broadly. Natural gas is an essential component of the world’s supply of energy. This gas is colorless, shapeless and odorless when it’s in uncontaminated form. This gas is cleanest, safest and very useful of all energy sources. Compressed natural gas has cleanest burning alternative fuel availability. Natural gas is found in Texas and Louisiana, and also by the Gulf of Mexico.

“All the humans require energy continuously, to heat our homes, cook our food, and generate our electricity. It is this need for energy that has elevated natural gas to such a level of importance in our society, and in our lives. At a time when we need all the energy we can find, increasing access to domestic sources of oil and natural gas would enhance our energy security.” - [http://www.naturalgas.org/overview/background.asp](http://www.naturalgas.org/overview/background.asp)

**Build an infrastructure for natural gas?**
(Shraddha Desai)

Natural gas is available in infinite amount. Also, natural gas is way cheaper than the gasoline. But the solution switching to the natural gas may raise one problem about the infrastructure of US gas station. The problem could be that the people who are willing to fill up their car tanks with natural gas they won’t have easy excess to it. There are only few gas stations available and only in Pennsylvania with natural gas pump facilities. The government would need to find a solution for the people by allotting more gas stations with natural gas pumps.

**Service Project:**
(Evan Lampert)

**To US Legislator**
Evan Lampert
9 High Ridge Road
Montvale, NJ, 07645
5514044170

Shraddha Desai
126/C, The Orchard,
Cranbury, NJ - 08512
7327635624

07/28/11
Dear Senator Menendez,

Hello, my name is Evan Lampert and I am asking for your support in eliminating the corn subsidies that our government is giving to farmers around the country. By eliminating these subsidies our nation will become a healthier and more prosperous one.

We know that our nation is in severe debt, and I firmly believe that by eliminating our corn subsidies, our country will make a huge step towards eliminating that debt and use that spending for more useful purposes. The excess production of corn is not only making our country unhealthy, but it is allowing us to keep our focus on refining the excess corn to make ethanol, which is used in gasoline. Ethanol is not the solution for an alternative fuel because it takes more energy to produce a gallon of ethanol than it actually gives off while being burned. Conserving and finding new ways for energy is a major concern, and this idea of spending billions of dollars to subsidize corn for fuel additives which use more energy than they actually give off is not very logical. If our government stopped the subsidies and focused some of that money on an alternative energy method, we would overcome a lot of obstacles in our country.

I have witnessed the effects of the corn subsidies first hand, as many people I know are now becoming obese and unhealthy. Also, our wallets have felt the effects to, because the price of gas is becoming absurdly high, and with more and more corn being exported each year, the price of ethanol will rise as well as the price at the pumps.

I urge you support the elimination of corn subsidies. This support could eventually save the American people billions of dollars of tax money being spent on a cause that is only “artificially” killing our country and taking more money out of our pockets.

Thank you for your time and consideration, it is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Evan Lampert
Shraddha Desai

To NJ Governor

Evan Lampert
9 High Ridge Road
Montvale, NJ, 07645
5514044170

Shraddha Desai
Dear Governor Christie,

Hello, my name is Evan Lampert and I am asking for your support to add more natural gas pumps in the state of New Jersey. Being that New Jersey is a leader of our nation, if we add more natural gas stations and make an emphasis on fueling vehicles with natural gas, the rest of the nation will follow and make our country a clean and resourceful one.

Today, as we all know, gasoline and ethanol is what fuels our countries vehicles. The 10% ethanol comes from a long and energy straining process of refining corn. The refining process actually uses more energy than the ethanol gives off while being burned. This is why I recommend, with your support, that we change our fueling stations to natural gas. There are a few natural gas stations around, but not nearly enough to make an impact on society and switch people’s minds to stop using gasoline, and start using natural gas. Natural gas is the cleanest and most abundant fuel that can be burned, and with an emphasis on adding more stations that can fuel cars with natural gas, more people will buy into this idea and switch over to a more productive fueling system.

I have witnessed the effects of the price of gasoline, as many people I know have also. Gasoline reached extremely high prices, and it is becoming more and more of a struggle to keep refueling our cars. Making a switch to natural gas and having abundant stations that can serve this product will reduce the costs at the pump and refuel our great state of New Jersey.

I urge you to support the enforcement of natural gas fueling stations. This support could eventually save the American people billions of dollars with the decrease of gas prices, and this saved money can be circulated for a better cause. Natural gas is the future energy supplier, and I hope that our celebrated state of New Jersey can be the first to heavily impact our nation on this idea.

Thank you for your time and consideration, it is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Evan Lampert
Shraddha Desai
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Editorials…

Shraddha Desai
Sent to Morning Call newspaper in Pennsylvania

Natural gas is the solution to save nation’s money…
But there’s a problem there…

As we all know that the US is the largest producer of the corn in world. Now since corn is the cheapest crop in US it’s being use in mostly each and every single product and it has increases the consumption of corn every year. This all make prices of food go high as well as
with the products in which corn is being used in very high amount. These also lead to the some symptoms of the food crisis in different countries, like Africa. People in Africa they don’t have an excess to food and water so easily like the way we, Americans have. At end, they are dying with hungriness.

The corn subsidy in US also plays a big role after all these issues. First, corn subsidy means that the government pays farmers to grow more corn because it is used in many ways, especially for energy. Our major concern for our country is to produce enough energy for our nation, and ethanol is the current solution to conserve energy. The gasoline we use to fill up our car tanks contain 10% ethanol in it, which is refined from the corn. In addition to the process of refining corn, it takes more energy than the energy we want to save.

By bringing towards the end of the issue, I would just like to say that switching to natural gas from gasoline will decreases consumption of corn speedily. It will lead to the solution that more corn will be available for humans and animals; also we can help the people in poor countries such as Africa. Plus, switching to natural gas also helps crop subsidy to stop, especially corn subsidies. In that case we would save billions of dollars of tax payers’ moneys and this money can help our nation to overcome with current critical financial situation. In a result, corn subsidy has now brought to its end soon.

At last, natural gas is available in infinite amount; also natural gas is way cheaper than the gasoline. But the solution switching to the natural gas may raise one problem about the infrastructure of US gas station. The problem could be that the people who are willing to fill up their car tanks with natural gas they won’t have easy excess to it. There are only few gas stations available and only in Pennsylvania with natural gas pump facilities. The government would need to find a solution for the people by allotting more gas stations with natural gas pumps.

Evan Lampert
Sent to Star Ledger newspaper

Elimination of the Corn Subsidies

The corn subsidy in the United States has to stop. When the government has billions of dollars to pay farmers to increase their production of corn, more ways are being created to use that excess corn, which may not be altogether good. Ethanol is a product today that is being used in gasoline. I know energy is a major concern for our country, and ethanol is our solution to conserve energy and not rely on other countries for it, but it is actually taking more energy to refine the corn and make ethanol than the ethanol itself contains.

By getting rid of these corn subsidies, we can start considering a new way to fuel our country instead of using ethanol. My solution is natural gas. Natural gas is being used today, but it is very rare. There are not enough cars nor fuel stations filling up on natural gas, and I believe this be because we are so stuck on the idea of ethanol and gasoline that it is not going to change until we have a serious problem that makes our country change to another fueling method.