



UNITED TO GROW FAMILY AGRICULTURE

# 2013 DISTRICT WORK PACKET

REFERENCE MATERIALS TO PREPARE FOR MEETINGS

**NATIONAL FARMERS UNION**  
GOVERNMENTRELATIONS@NFUDC.ORG  
WWW.NFU.ORG



August 1, 2013

Dear Farmers Union member:

National Farmers Union needs your help! Members of Congress are leaving Washington for the month of August and heading back home to hear from their constituents. This is a perfect opportunity for you to meet with them or their staff and discuss the issues that are important to you, like the 2013 Farm Bill, the Renewable Fuel Standard, immigration reform, Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) reauthorization, Country-of-Origin Labeling and a Chinese company's proposed purchase of Smithfield Foods. You may lobby on any or all of these issues.

What follows is information you can use to communicate with your members of Congress while they are back in your state or Congressional district during the August Congressional recess. The August recess lasts from Monday, Aug. 5 through Friday, Sept. 6.

Enclosed are a number of documents that will help you learn more about the legislative issues that matter most to family farmers and ranchers like you and communicate effectively with your members of Congress. These documents include:

- A district work packet with talking points that you can use when you are meeting with members of Congress and their staff. Feel free to make copies for yourself and to give to them;
- A side-by-side comparison of the 2013 House and Senate farm bills, and of current law;
- Tips on scheduling a meeting with your members of Congress, and on lobbying;
- A sample letter that you can personalize and send to your members of Congress;
- Twitter handles for members of Congress, and sample tweets and Facebook posts you can use to advocate for these priorities through social media; and
- Information and sample communications from Growth Energy on the Renewable Fuel Standard.

Your efforts this August are a critical part of NFU's legislative success. If you have any questions or need any further information, please contact NFU at 202-554-1600. Good luck, and thanks for all your hard work!

Sincerely,

Roger Johnson  
President

2013 Farm Bill - Comparisons				
Overall Farm Bill	Current law	Senate version (S. 954)	House version (H.R. 1947)	NFU Asks
		Passed Committee on May 14 by a vote of 15-5.	Passed Committee on May 15 by a vote of 36-10.	
		Passed Senate on June 10 by vote of 66-27. Maintains existing permanent law provisions	Failed on House floor on June 20 by a vote of 195-235. "Farm-only" version that makes 2013 new permanent law passed House floor on July 11 by a vote of 216-208.	Do not rescind permanent law
Savings		\$23 billion savings.	\$12.9 billion savings	
<b>Title I: Commodities</b>				
Revenue Protection	Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) provided some revenue assurances.	Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) - provides assistance when revenue falls between 78% to 88% on county or individual basis.	Revenue Loss Coverage (RLC) - provides assistance when revenue falls between 75% to 85%.	
Price Protection	Counter-cyclical Payments (CCP) set. (See attachment)	Adverse Market Payment (AMP): Reference price set at 55% of Olympic average for all covered commodities except rice and peanuts.	Price Loss Coverage (PLC): Reference prices set in statute (see attachment). When actual average prices fall below reference price, pays the difference on eligible acres and at yield average.	Include House reference prices
Direct Payments	Contains Direct Payments and ACRE	Eliminated	Eliminated for all commodities except cotton for 2014-2016	Eliminate
Dairy Safety Net	Dairy Product Price Support Program, Milk Income Loss Contracts.	Margin revenue insurance program	Margin revenue insurance program	Include dairy margin insurance program
Dairy Supply Management	No provision	Dairy Market Stabilization program included.	Dairy Market Stabilization program not included.	Include dairy market stabilization program
Payment Limits	\$65,000 payment limit for CCPs	ARC payment limit for all commodities is \$50,000.	Payments are capped at \$125,000 per person for all commodity programs.	
Conservation Compliance	Required for Title I eligibility. See Title XI: Crop Insurance for more information	Required for Title I eligibility. See Title XI: Crop Insurance for more information	Required for Title I eligibility. See Title XI: Crop Insurance for more information	Require compliance
Sugar	Has operated at no cost to taxpayers but may incur costs in the future.	No changes, except for a date change as to when USDA must make import decisions.	No changes, except for a date change as to when USDA must make import decisions.	No changes
Livestock Disaster Programs	Expired, but provided some funds for disaster recovery efforts	Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Livestock Forage Program (LFP), Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP) and Tree Assistance Program (TAP) included with mandatory funding.	Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Livestock Forage Program (LFP), Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP) and Tree Assistance Program (TAP) included with mandatory funding. Provides more funding and higher payments (for some programs) than S. 954.	Defend and strengthen
<b>Title II: Conservation</b>				
Overall	Includes 23 programs	Consolidates title into 13 programs	Consolidates title into 13 programs	No changes
		Cuts \$3.5 billion	Cuts \$4.8 billion	
<b>Title IV: Nutrition</b>				
Cuts to SNAP		Cuts SNAP \$4.1 billion	NOT INCLUDED	
<b>Title VII: Research</b>				
Organic	CCC funding: \$78 million for FY 2009-12.	Organic agriculture research and extension initiative is provided with \$16 million/year for 2014-2018	Mandatory CCC funding of \$20,000,000 for each year 2014-2018	Fund at similar levels
Funding for Specialty Crop Research Initiative	CCC funding: \$30 million (FY 2008); \$50 million annually (FY 2009-12).	\$25 million for 2014; \$30 million for each of 2015 and 2016; \$65 million for 2017; \$50 million for 2018	\$50 million for each of 2014 and 2015; \$55,000,000 each for 2016 and 2017; \$65 million for 2018.	Mandatory funding
Funding for Beginning Farmer and Rancher Programs	Maximum grant is \$250,000/year.	Mandatory funding of \$17 million/year for 2014 through 2018	Reauthorized	Mandatory funding
<b>Title IX: Energy</b>				
	\$1.2 billion mandatory. Funds blender pumps and feasibility studies under REAP	\$900 million mandatory. Funding for blender pumps and feasibility studies	No mandatory funding. Prohibits funding blender pumps but funds feasibility studies	Senate funding level with funding for blender pumps and feasibility studies under REAP
<b>Title XI: Crop Insurance</b>				
Compliance/Limits	Does not link crop insurance premium subsidies with conservation compliance. No limits on subsidies	Links crop insurance premium subsidies with conservation compliance. Reduces premium subsidies by 15 percent for farms with an AGI greater than \$750,000 annually	Does not link crop insurance premium subsidies with conservation compliance. No limits on subsidies	Link with compliance. No limits on subsidies
<b>Title XII: Miscellaneous</b>				
Country-of-Origin Labeling	COOL in effect, awaiting new rule announcement to comply with WTO.	No changes.	Includes a direction to conduct a study on COOL	Oppose any unnecessary studies
Packers and Stockyards Act/Livestock Competition	Several poultry rules allowed to proceed from the 2010 GIPSA rulemaking process.	No changes.	Includes provision to repeal Section 1106 of 2008 Farm Bill and undercuts enforcement	No Change

# SAMPLE SCRIPT

During the August recess, while members of Congress are back in the state, you may try and schedule a private meeting with your Senators and Representative. Alternatively, many members of Congress hold “town hall” meetings across the state or district where constituents can come and discuss issues that are important to them. Either option is a good way to make your voice heard.

You should be able to learn about August town hall meeting schedules either from your local news media or by calling your Senators’ or Representative’s offices.

To schedule a private meeting, feel free to use the phone or email script below. Your member of Congress’s website should provide more information about contacting their office.

“My name is [NAME] and I am a farmer/rancher from [HOMETOWN]. I am interested in meeting with [MEMBER OF CONGRESS] in [STATE] sometime in August to discuss issues that are important to my family and me. Could you please help me schedule a meeting, or direct me to the correct staff member?”

# TIPS ON MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

- Do your homework. Study the talking points in the district work packet, and be sure and think of ways that you can add your own personal experience to each of them.
- Think about potential disagreements and how you can counter them in a respectful way.
- Remember that meeting with staff can be just as important as meeting a member of Congress -- members trust their staff's recommendations.
- Be on time, which means be early.
- Dress appropriately for a professional meeting.
- During the meeting, be brief and polite.
- Give background information on why something is not working right, and give a positive alternative to make it better.
- Discuss. Do not argue.
- Get a commitment of support, opposition, etc. from the member of Congress -- this will vary, depending on the issue.
- Always leave on friendly terms.
- After the visit, follow up on any items necessary, and send a thank-you note to the person you met.
- Stay informed on the issues you discussed (subscribing to the NFU Government Relations Update is a good way to begin), and keep in touch with the office as the issues progress.

# SAMPLE LETTER

[MY ADDRESS]

[MY CITY, STATE, ZIP]

August [X], 2013

**IF WRITING TO A REPRESENTATIVE:**

The Honorable [FIRSTNAME LASTNAME]  
U.S. House of Representatives  
[XXXX Cannon OR Longworth OR Rayburn] House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**IF WRITING TO A SENATOR:**

The Honorable [FIRSTNAME LASTNAME]  
U.S. Senate  
[XXX Dirksen OR Hart OR Russell] Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Select only one  
address/member per letter.

Personalize the highlighted  
portions as well as the bulleted  
list to best reflect the needs of  
your operation.

Dear [Rep. OR Sen. LASTNAME]:

PERSONALIZE THIS SECTION WITH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU AND YOUR OPERATION:

[My family and I grow/raise XXXX acres of CROP OR XXX head of LIVESTOCK near TOWN. We are the Xth generation on our family's farm.] As your constituent, I urge you to support completing work on a new, comprehensive five-year farm bill before the extension of the 2008 bill expires in September 2013. It is critical that House leaders appoint conferees and begin the formal conference process along with the Senate.

The farm bill is a vital piece of legislation for my family, and for farmers, ranchers and growers across the country. It is a fiscally responsible bill that saves taxpayer dollars while protecting our nation's food security and environmental health. I hope that passing a new farm bill will be your highest legislative priority this year.

I also ask that you work with conferees to support the following priorities to be resolved during the conference process:

- Include fixed reference prices, such as those proposed by the House bill's commodity title, rather than basing price protection on a rolling Olympic average, as in the Senate bill. This will ensure that there is a meaningful safety net in place when prices drop for long periods;
- Defend and strengthen livestock disaster programs, which were included in both the House and Senate bills. These ensure farmers facing historic droughts, such as the one that affected much of the country last year, do not go out of business;
- Ensure the new dairy program includes both margin insurance and market stabilization programs to provide protection against rising production costs and market collapse;

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- Provide \$900 million of mandatory funding for energy title programs, and include eligibility for blender pumps and feasibility studies under the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP);
- Oppose any additional, unnecessary studies on the implementation of Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL) rules, which are already the law of the land, and resist any efforts to undermine COOL law;
- Support fair and competitive markets for independent family farmers and ranchers and oppose any language that would undercut enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards Act;
- Link crop insurance premium subsidy eligibility with conservation compliance requirements in order to ensure farmers remain responsible stewards of the land;
- Maintain existing permanent farm bill law in order to provide Congress an incentive to periodically review and improve our farm policy; and
- Ensure any changes made to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) during conference consideration reflect true compromise and will be ultimately accepted by both houses of Congress and signed into law by the president.

I hope this letter illustrates just how critically important a new five-year farm bill is to my family, and to millions of American farmers like me. As small business owners, it is extremely difficult for us to make long-term financial and business decisions when we don't know what types of policies will be in place for the coming years. This uncertainty could be crippling to a relatively healthy farm economy in a time when we can't afford to jeopardize our economic recovery. Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

[MY NAME]



UNITED TO GROW FAMILY AGRICULTURE

# SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

If you have a Facebook or Twitter account, you should consider updating your status or directing a tweet at your member(s) of Congress. Members and their staff are monitoring social media and are known to engage constituents on these platforms as well. We have included sample status messages and tweets on the following page.

Visit <http://stuffthought.com/blog/?p=686> to find the Twitter handles for your members of Congress. Twitter handles for members of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees are below:

## House Agriculture Committee

First Name	Last Name	Party	State / District	Twitter
Steve	King	R	IA-5	@SteveKingIA
Ann	Kuster	D	NH-2	@RepAnnieKuster
Doug	LaMalfa	R	CA-1	@RepLaMalfa
Frank	Lucas	R	OK-3	@RepFrankLucas
Michelle	Lujan Grisham	D	NM-1	@RepLujanGrisham
Sean Patrick	Maloney	D	NY-18	@RepSeanMaloney
James "Jim"	McGovern	D	MA-3	@RepMcGovern
Mike	McIntyre	D	NC-7	@RepMikeMcIntyre
Gloria	Negrete McLeod	D	CA-35	@RepMcLeod
Robert "Randy"	Neugebauer	R	TX-19	@RandyNeugebauer
Kristi	Noem	R	SD-AL	@RepKristiNoem
Rick	Nolan	D	MN-8	@USRepRickNolan
Collin	Peterson	D	MN-7	
Reid	Ribble	R	WI-8	@RepRibble
Martha	Roby	R	AL-2	@RepMarthaRoby
Mike	Rogers	R	AL-3	@RepMikeRogersAL
Kurt	Schrader	D	OR-5	@RepSchrader
Austin	Scott	R	GA-8	@AustinScottGA08
David Albert	Scott	D	GA-13	@repdavidscott
Glenn W. "G.T."	Thompson	R	PA-5	@CongressmanGT
Scott	Tipton	R	CO-3	@RepTipton
Juan	Vargas	D	CA-51	@RepJuanVargas
Filemon	Vela	D	TX-34	@RepFilemonVela
Timothy "Tim"	Walz	D	MN-1	@RepTimWalz
Ted	Yoho	R	FL-3	@RepTedYoho

## Senate Agriculture Committee

First Name	Last Name	Party	State	Twitter
Max	Baucus	D	Montana	@MaxBaucus
Michael	Bennet	D	Colorado	@SenBennetCO
John	Boozman	R	Arkansas	@JohnBoozman
Sherrod	Brown	D	Ohio	@SenSherrodBrown
Saxby	Chambliss	R	Georgia	@SaxbyChambliss
Thad	Cochran	R	Mississippi	@SenThadCochran
William	Cowan	D	Massachusetts	@SenMoCowan
Joe	Donnelly	D	Indiana	@SenDonnelly
Kirsten	Gillibrand	D	New York	@SenGillibrand
Charles	Grassley	R	Iowa	@ChuckGrassley
Tom	Harkin	D	Iowa	@SenatorHarkin
Heidi	Heitkamp	D	North Dakota	@SenatorHeitkamp
John	Hoeven	R	North Dakota	@SenJohnHoeven
Mike	Johanns	R	Nebraska	@Mike_Johanns
Amy	Klobuchar	D	Minnesota	@amyklobuchar
Patrick	Leahy	D	Vermont	@SenatorLeahy
Mitch	McConnell	R	Kentucky	@McConnellPress
Pat	Roberts	R	Kansas	@SenPatRoberts
Debbie	Stabenow	D	Michigan	@StabenowPress
John	Thune	R	South Dakota	@SenJohnThune

## LEADERSHIP'S TWITTER HANDLES:

Speaker of the House John Boehner: @SpeakerBoehner  
House Majority Leader Eric Cantor: @GOPLeader  
House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi: @NancyPelosi  
House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer: @WhipHoyer

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid: @SenatorReid  
Assistant Senate Majority Leader Dick Durbin: @SenatorDurbin  
Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell: @McConnellPress  
Assistant Senate Minority Leader John Cornyn: @JohnCornyn

## SAMPLE TWEETS/POSTS

### **Farm Bill:**

- #Congress: Stop holding the #FarmBill hostage. Pass a final bill now!
- Farmers and ranchers need certainty. @MEMBEROFCONGRESS, support a new five-year #FarmBill.
- #Congress: No more #FarmBill delays. Time to send the bill to @BarackObama's desk.
- 16 million American #jobs depend on agriculture #FarmBill
- #Congress: Do your job and finish the #FarmBill before time runs out.

### **RFS:**

- Oil is the problem. Renewable fuel is the solution. Protect the #RFS.
- The #RFS helps farmers, consumers and rural communities. @MEMBEROFCONGRESS, show your support!
- Did you know homegrown #ethanol saved the average American \$1200 last year? Protect the #RFS!

### **Immigration Reform:**

- #Congress must do better for our economy and our country by modernizing our #immigration system.
- The #Senate #immigration bill is endorsed by both farmers and farm workers. @MEMBEROFCONGRESS, we need comprehensive reform now!
- American agriculture needs #immigration reform that works. #Congress, the time to take action is now!

### **CFTC Reauthorization:**

- Markets should serve farmers and consumers, not the other way around. #CFTC
- Markets need watchdogs to prevent another Peregrine or MF Global. @MEMBEROFCONGRESS, support the #CFTC to protect farmers!
- Make #WallStreet obey the rules of the road. Support the #CFTC!



UNITED TO GROW FAMILY AGRICULTURE

# SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

## SAMPLE TWEETS/POSTS

### **COOL:**

- If a t-shirt needs a country of origin label, so does a t-bone steak. Keep #COOL
- If a skirt needs a country of origin label, so does a skirt steak. Keep #COOL
- Don't let meatpackers keep you in the dark about your food. Keep #COOL
- #COOL is just common-sense. @MEMBEROFCONGRESS, defend consumers and #KeepCOOL!

### **Shuanghui/Smithfield:**

- @BarackObama: Stop the Chinese takeover of 1/4th our nation's bacon! #Smithfield
- @MEMBEROFCONGRESS: Don't let China control our food! Tell #CFIUS to stop the Chinese takeover of #Smithfield Foods.
- Want some illegal additives with your bacon? Yum! Tell #Congress to stop the Chinese takeover of #Smithfield Foods.



## Sample RFS Phone Scripts

### **Script- Jobs (Make sure to mention YOUR job and how you are affected)**

Hi my name is [FIRST, LAST] and I live in Representative [LAST NAME]'s district in [INSERT TOWN/CITY/COUNTY]. I own a local farm and I am calling to talk about the Renewable Fuel Standard.

This is a really important policy. Please let Congressman/woman [LAST NAME] know that I urge him/her to support the RFS and oppose any efforts to change or repeal it.

My (farm, livelihood, income, economic security) depends greatly on the RFS, and so do the jobs of 400,000 other Americans. We all pay taxes and contribute to the local economy, and without the RFS, things would be way worse here in [INSERT TOWN/CITY/COUNTY]. I've seen how it has positively impacted our community and am afraid of what would happen if it is changed.

Fact is, we need the RFS, and Congressman/woman [LAST NAME] needs to support it and his/her constituents that depend on it.

Thanks for your time.

### **Script- Gas Prices**

Hi my name is [FIRST, LAST] and I live in Representative [LAST NAME]'s district in [INSERT TOWN/CITY/COUNTY]. I am calling to talk about the ethanol industry.

I wanted to let the Congressman/woman how important this industry is to me. Not only do I work as [INSERT OCCUPATION] in this industry, but I also know how important it has been to our economy.

American ethanol has created so many jobs in towns across the U.S. and also has such a positive impact on gas prices. Without the industry, gas prices would go up even higher. We're lucky we have some ethanol options at the pump.

America needs the ethanol industry. I need it, my neighbors need it. Please tell Congressman/woman [LAST NAME] to support me and his/her constituents. Don't let Congress mess with the RFS.

Thanks for your time.



## Sample RFS Letters to Congress

To a Senator:  
The Honorable **(Full Name)**  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

To a Representative:  
The Honorable **(Full Name)**  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator **(Last Name)**:

Dear Representative **(Last Name)**:

I strongly urge you to maintain the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) and reject any efforts to waive or alter this policy. As our only successful domestic energy policy in more than 40 years, the RFS has helped improve America's energy security, revitalized our rural communities and created jobs nationwide, including **(hundreds/thousands of)** jobs in communities throughout **(Your State)**.

Without the RFS, I would not have had the success that I have today as a **[insert title] at [company]**. This legislation means I have a job. It means I have the money to support my family, and help my **[XXX]** employees support themselves and contribute to our community. This significant economic impact is not unique to our community – it is changing towns all across our nation.

In addition to the economic benefits of this policy, the RFS is necessary to ensure Americans have the right to cheaper, cleaner, homegrown renewable fuels. The oil industry's monopoly on the liquid fuels market has gone on far too long.

In fact, a recent Fuels America poll shows our nation's overwhelming support for renewable fuels:

- 75 percent of Americans want more renewable fuel options at gas stations.
- 73 percent favor the Renewable Fuel Standard.
- 3 in 5 blame the oil industry for high gas prices.

This strong support for the RFS is growing by the day as more and more Americans learn about the value of renewable fuels. Thanks to the RFS, in just a few short years our country has built a growing industry and transformed the fuel market for the better, and there is significant potential for future success.

Let the RFS work as intended. Let it continue to help reduce our dangerous dependence on foreign oil, create sustainable jobs across varied industries nationwide and clean our air. Let it continue to make progress and advances in an industry that was stalled for decades.

I strongly urge you to maintain the RFS.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



To a Senator:  
The Honorable **(Full Name)**  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

To a Representative:  
The Honorable **(Full Name)**  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator **(Last Name)**:

Dear Congressman/woman **(Last Name)**:

I urge you to preserve the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) and reject any efforts to waive or alter the RFS. As our only successful domestic energy policy in more than 40 years, the RFS has helped improve America's energy security and created jobs nationwide, including numerous jobs in communities throughout **(Your State)**.

Without the RFS, I would not have had the success that I have today. This legislation means I have a job. It means I have the money to support my family and be a contributing member of my community. And I'm not unique—I have seen the impact this legislation has had on my neighbors and our community.

Changing the RFS would undo so much good.

Here are some truths about the RFS:

- Ethanol supports nearly 400,000 jobs. Good-paying jobs, like mine, right here in the heart of America. From plant workers to farmers to shops in town, these are jobs that are here to stay and can't be outsourced.
- Ethanol contributed more than \$40 billion to our nation's GDP last year. That's money staying within our borders, not getting shipped to OPEC and other oil-producing nations.
- Ethanol reduces gas prices by as much as \$1 per gallon.
- Ethanol is proven to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 59 percent; helping clean the air we breathe, and creating a better environment for tomorrow's generations.
- Ethanol has a higher octane rating, helping the vehicles meet rigorous manufacturers and government demands.

Thanks to the RFS, in just a few short years our country has built a growing industry and transformed the fuel market for the better. Let the RFS work as intended. Let it continue to help reduce our dangerous dependence on foreign oil, create sustainable jobs across varied industries nationwide and clean our air. Let it continue to make progress and advances in an industry that was stalled for decades.

Now is the time to let the market work. Now is the time to stand by our farmers. Now is the time to stand behind the progress we have made by protecting RFS.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



## Sample RFS Letters to the Editor (LTE)

### **SAMPLE LTE 1 – How My Farm Contributes**

As a **farmer** and **[insert your title if applicable]** of **[insert name of your farm]**, I have seen firsthand the robust economic impact that ethanol has had on rural communities across the Midwest. **[Insert the name of your town]**, and towns all across America's heartland, are once again booming as we bring more jobs – and money - back home through the renewable fuels industry.

My **farm employs XXXX** contributing to the overall ethanol industry, which supports nearly 400,000 jobs American jobs. We're creating jobs, and we're boosting our national economy, as our industry contributed more than \$40 billion to the nation's gross domestic product in 2012.

And, as an American, I am most proud of the fact that my **farm**, my industry and my colleagues are helping reduce our nation's dangerous dependence on foreign oil. American ethanol, a fuel that is less expensive and produced right here at home, is a ready, reliable and renewable alternative to foreign oil.

None of this would be possible without the Renewable Fuel Standard, the most important energy policy our nation has seen in 40 years.

**[Conclusion Option 1]** It's time to convey to Congress and our elected officials how effective the Renewable Fuel Standard is. Urge (**Congressman/Senator XXX**) to support the Renewable Fuel Standard – and support our rural communities.

**[Conclusion Option 2]** I'm proud to use homegrown, American ethanol for my cars. I'm proud to help reduce our dependence on foreign oil, help support our rural communities and boost a booming, homegrown industry. It is critical to both my own, and my community's economic well-being and I hope Congressman/Senator XXX will stand up for rural America and our energy security by supporting the Renewable Fuel Standard.



## **SAMPLE LTE 2 – ETHANOL BENEFITS**

At a time when jobs are being lost overseas and top research is being conducted outside America's borders, the ethanol industry has boosted our nation's economic prosperity. For the first time in generations, Americans are returning to their hometowns to work in agriculture. Millions of dollars from some of the world's largest, most innovative companies are pouring into local communities. Cutting-edge research and technological innovation is occurring right in the heartland.

Ethanol has created nearly 400,000 domestic jobs, sparked academic research at top universities, and revitalized small towns. Our nation is poised for continued economic growth, energy security and leadership.

In 2011, ethanol contributed more than \$42 billion to the nation's GDP and more than \$30 billion to household income. The industry has improved agriculture efficiency, allowing for higher corn yields with less environmental impact. And ethanol has decreased greenhouse gas emissions by more than 20 million tons.

It's time we stop sending nearly a billion dollars a day overseas to countries that don't have our best interests in mind. It's time we stop sending troops to protect oil shipping lanes. It's time we end our dangerous addiction to foreign oil, and instead take those hundreds of billions of dollars we are sending overseas and invest it right here, in American energy independence with homegrown, sustainable biofuels.

## **SAMPLE LTE 3 – Food Prices**

There is a lot of talk that ethanol and corn producers are driving up the price of food. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Of America's entire corn crop, only the starch is used in ethanol production, a total of only 17.5 percent net corn acres. All the protein, fiber and oil from corn are returned into the cycle as a livestock and poultry feed known as distillers grains. These distillers grains not only replace corn in animal livestock feed, but also soybean meal, benefiting food production.

The real driver of food prices has nothing to do with agriculture, let alone ethanol. Energy intensive costs, such as transportation and storage, and marketing are the real culprits. As the price of oil increases, so do the costs associated with bringing goods to market. For each food dollar spent at the store, 84.5 cents can be attributed to marketing, labor, packaging, transportation, storage and processing costs, as well as salaries and profits, while the farmer only receives 15.5 cents.

As a matter of fact, a recent World Bank study outlined how crude oil prices are responsible for 50 percent of the increase in food prices since 2004! So, the true culprits are our friends at Big Oil, who are gouging us at the pump *and* at the grocery store!

It's time people start learning who is really driving up the price of food, instead of blaming America's grain farmers and ethanol producers who feed the world and fuel America.



## Opinion-Editorial

### **OP ED 1: RFS**

The Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) is the most important and innovative U.S. energy policy in 40 years. This policy has been the single most effective tool at encouraging the production of ethanol, the only large-scale, commercially-viable alternative to fossil fuels.

Since 2005, the American ethanol industry has created and supported nearly 400,000 domestic jobs, contributed more than \$40 billion annually to our gross domestic product, helped curb our dependence on foreign oil from 60 percent in 2005 to 40 percent in 2012, and spurred significant growth across rural communities. The numbers don't lie - the RFS, and homegrown American ethanol, have made great contributions to our nation, including boosting our economy, improving our national security, cleaning the environment and fostering future prosperity and innovation.

The more American ethanol succeeds, however, the more Big Oil and its cronies lash out, fearful of losing their monopolistic grasp over the liquid fuels market. Renewable fuels offer a cost-competitive alternative to our dependence on fossil fuels, and the more this industry grows, the more nervous Big Oil becomes.

It is no surprise that the ethanol industry is under attack as Big Oil and their allies spend millions upon millions of dollars daily to destroy the single most dynamic economic market in modern American agriculture. But we can't let misled critics derail us from progress, economic prosperity and a better tomorrow.

Renewable fuels – led by the RFS – have changed how we look at both American agriculture and American energy. And, there is a vast untapped potential for the future – we can further bolster our rural infrastructure, keep billions of dollars at home instead of sending them abroad, clean our air, create jobs at home, and help American consumers save more money at the pump.

In order to do this, we need your help. We need your energy and voice to call on Congress to stand up to Big Oil and protect the Renewable Fuel Standard. Let Congress know that the RFS is vital to keep us innovating, and to keep rural America booming.



## **OP ED 2: LOCAL ECONOMY/PERSONAL STORY**

***Note: Please feel free to modify this letter, adding your own personal experiences, putting your story into your own words. Our critics are vocal in their opposition, but your stories will help set the record straight on the importance of both the RFS and America's ethanol industry.***

As a [POSITION TITLE] from [XX FARM], I help support to [TOWN/COUNTY's] local economy. But it is not just me. Our engineers, our farmers, our technicians and our future industry leaders are working together to simultaneously strengthen America's energy independence and move our nation toward further economic prosperity. None of this innovation, economic growth and security would be possible without the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS).

The RFS has vastly expanded American renewable energy industries, contributing more than \$40 billion to the nation's gross domestic product in 2012 alone. This energy strategy bolsters the American ethanol industry, creates nearly 400,000 domestic jobs, sparks innovative academic research at top American universities and revitalizes towns like (mine/ XXX (specific town name)).

You see, when the RFS is attacked, it is an attack on my job, my town and this local economy. At a time when jobs are shipped overseas, and top research is conducted outside our borders, America's growing ethanol industry is creating economic prosperity. We are creating economic opportunities in agriculture, and related industries, for our best and brightest to return home and thrive. Millions of dollars from some of the world's largest companies are pouring in to local communities. Cutting-edge research and technological innovation is occurring right here at home, in XXX, America's heartland.

The RFS is built to last; it has already transformed communities across this country and provided consumers savings and a choice at the pump. Now is not the time to change this policy. Now is the time to trust in it, trust our farmers and trust our homegrown industries. It is time to stop attacking the heart of America, and let our economy – and innovation – flourish.