

For the record, my name is Shirley Ball, I am a farmer from Valley county. I have been involved in promoting ethanol since the 1970's when our nation was being embargoed by the OPEC nations. We were in doubt that we would have the fuel needed to harvest our crops that year. That was when I first heard about ethanol fuel, an alcohol fuel that could be made from the grain we grow on our farms, or out of anything else that could be fermented. My thought at that time was why is the United States being held hostage to the OPEC nations when we have such a surplus of grain. It did not make sense. Since that time, I have been involved in many committees and organizations to educate about ethanol as a fuel. Currently serving as the Executive Director of EPAC Ethanol producers and consumers, a non profit, 15 year old organization that educates about ethanol fuel.

The more I learn, the more I know that ethanol production can be a win win situation for our state, our nation. Of course, there are nay Sayers. No business likes to lose a portion of their sales. However, a 10% blend of ethanol with 90 % gasoline will provide consumers with a number of benefits. For the environment, the harmful auto emissions are reduced. For energy security, every gallon of ethanol produced from a crop grown in this country, we reduce the number of gallons of oil we import, not only improving our balance of trade, but making us the US less dependent on foreign dictators, and working towards a time when we do not have to send young men and women to war zones to protect oil fields.

The biggest advantage would be that of jobs in the rural economy. In 1987, I was on a 7 person panel appointed by USDA Deputy Sec. Richard of Ag. Senator Dole had asked that the panel be formed to study the cost effectiveness of ethanol. It was proven that price of grain would rise because of ethanol production; it was proven that good paying jobs would be created, and that ethanol business would pay taxes into the counties and communities where ethanol plants were built. It has just gotten better and better. Minnesota is held up as a leader, and other states are also making great strides. In MN they passed a law that said All fuel sold in the state would contain ethanol. They only had a few plants at that time, and now, there are 14, with some others under consideration. They also provide an incentive and I heard a speaker from the MN Dept of AG when I

attended the Governors Ethanol coalition meeting say that a recent study shows that for every dollar the state has invested in ethanol incentives has been returned 17 fold. That is pretty impressive.

IN Montana, ethanol blended fuel has been used for years, Wolf point Farmers union was the first station in the state to sell the blended fuel. I was there when Ted Schwinden, LT Gov at the time, cut the ribbon and put the blend into his car. Other stations in the area also started selling the blend about that time. Nashua, Peerless, Poplar, Opheim, and others. You know, they would not still be selling the blend if the customers did not like it and buy it. It is very successful. Many of them even deliver in bulk. We put ethanol blend in all our farm machinery and equipment that runs on gasoline, from the trucks to the snowmobile, to the four wheeler, to the auger, even the old swather, that my husband always said would not run right unless it had the ethanol.

In regards to planes, I am acquainted with a number of people who attend national ethanol meetings, and know some who are pilots of small planes. They have not had a problem under the MN law, I do not think the dealers in MN are different than the dealers in MT