

# THOMAS COUNTY Herald

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THOMAS COUNTY, THEDFORD, NEBRASKA 69166

(USPS 596-550)

THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2020

NO. 48

## Renewable Fuels Month spotlights benefits of homegrown fuel options



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**B20 (6% to 20%) is a common biodiesel blend because it represents a good balance of cost, emissions and cold-weather performance. Generally, B20 and lower-level blends can be used in current engines without modifications.**

May is typically the kickoff to the summer driving season and has historically been a time Nebraska's renewable fuels industries have come together to highlight the importance of clean-burning biofuel options. However, due to COVID-19 concerns, Renewable Fuels Month was postponed and will be celebrated throughout June 2020. To help promote locally-produced biofuels, such as ethanol and biodiesel, Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts recently declared June as Renewable Fuels Month. Since 2006, the acting Nebraska governor has dedicated one month out of each year to serve as a public awareness campaign.

"As a farmer who grows corn, soybeans and raises livestock, I understand the importance of biofuels to the agricultural industry," said David Bruntz, chairman of the Nebraska Corn Board and farmer from Friend. "While ethanol and biodiesel have greatly helped add value to Nebraska's corn and soybean crops, these renewable fuels also benefit consumers. They're typically less expensive, high performing and better for the environment."

The environmental benefits of ethanol and biodiesel are particularly

important this year, as new scientific research from Harvard University has shown patients with COVID-19 were more likely to die in areas of high pollution than in areas of low pollution. U.S. Department of Agriculture research shows ethanol emissions are up to 43% less compared to gasoline without ethanol, a statistic that has continued to improve.

"There are some people who choose not to use ethanol based off of misinformation they may have heard in the past," said Jan tenBensel, chairman of the Nebraska Ethanol Board and farmer from Cambridge. "All I can say is to try a higher blend. If you have any vehicle model year 2001 and newer, your vehicle is approved for at least a 15% ethanol blend, sometimes called Unleaded88. E15 is the most tested fuel ever. Also, check your owner's manual. You might have a flex fuel vehicle, which can use any ethanol blends up to 85% (known as E85). The higher the blend used, the more money saved and the fewer toxic chemicals emitted from the tailpipe."

Nebraska is often known for its "golden triangle" of agriculture, referring to the close proximity and

synergies achieved through the state's corn, ethanol and livestock production sectors. As the nation's second largest ethanol producing state, nearly 2.1 billion gallons of ethanol and about 6.4 million metric tons of distillers grains (high protein livestock feed) are created each year from Nebraska's 25 ethanol plants. Additionally, ethanol production boosts Nebraska's rural economy by employing over 1,400 people.

Biodiesel is another important biofuel which supports the state's soybean farmers and provides health benefits to the general public. Biodiesel is a clean-burning fuel made from soy oil and other renewable resources. It offers fuel economy, horsepower and torque similar to petroleum diesel, but with fewer harmful effects on diesel engines, the environment and human health. In fact, biodiesel lowers particulate matter by 47% and reduces smog, making air cleaner.

Biodiesel, renewable diesel and renewable jet fuel are low-carbon fuel options used on road, off road, in air transportation, electricity generation and home heating applications. Usage will exceed 6 billion gallons by

2030, eliminating over 55 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent greenhouse gas emissions annually.

"Biodiesel has tremendous human health benefits, but it also makes economic sense," said Eugene Goering, chairman of the Nebraska Soybean Board and farmer from Columbus. "Not only is biodiesel adding 63 cents per bushel to the value of soybeans, but it also helps livestock producers because it decreases soy protein meal costs. This advanced biofuel is responsible for over 60,000 jobs across the country which supports the American economy."

Throughout June, follow the Nebraska Corn Board, the Nebraska Ethanol Board, the Nebraska Soybean Board and Renewable Fuels Nebraska on Facebook for additional facts and statistics on ethanol and biodiesel. These Facebook pages will also feature trivia promotions, contests and up-to-date information regarding upcoming fuel promotions.

Consumers looking for higher ethanol blends can visit [getbiofuel.com](http://getbiofuel.com) or [UNL88.com](http://UNL88.com). Biodiesel information and locations can be found at [biodieselNE.com](http://biodieselNE.com) and [biodiesel.org](http://biodiesel.org).

## Willis New NC Director

The Nebraska Cattlemen leadership and staff are very excited for the unique opportunity to have Jeff Willis be an active member of the NC team. Being a current employee of Harry A. Koch Company, Jeff will actively work with NC staff focused on marketing NCIG products and promoting Nebraska Cattlemen membership.

Jeff Willis has brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to HAK and NCIG. Jeff's background includes working in feedlot operations as well as a livestock production manager for a commercial feed mill operation. For the past 20 years Jeff has worked in the Financial Services sector and has been instrumental in facilitating business transition planning and developing banking relationships for the agricultural community.

"Jeff Willis is an ideal representative to share NCIG opportunities and membership benefits to current and prospective members. His personal background in the cattle industry allows Jeff to have a direct understanding of what beef producers deal with every day. We're thrilled to have Jeff be an active part of the



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NC team." Pete McMlymont, NC Executive Vice President.

"I am confident Jeff will be key to bringing knowledge and experience to NC members as Director of NCIG. He is a great communicator, hard worker, and problem solver, — with a great sense of humor. This position was made for someone just like Jeff." Jeff Scanlan, Senior Vice President at Harry A Koch Co.

Jeff Willis resides in Shelby, Nebraska with his wife and 4 children. In his free time, he enjoys landscaping, tinkering in his old gas station and driving his '95 Peterbilt. Jeff can be reached at (402)566-5431 or by email at [NCIG@necattlemen.org](mailto:NCIG@necattlemen.org)

## Game & Parks has resources for landowners with wildlife damage

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is proactively working with landowners who have encountered wildlife damage to their crops and property.

"Crop and livestock damage can be a serious issue for many landowners," said Game and Parks Director Jim Douglas. "We understand this and need to let landowners know what tools we have to help them, and listen to their ideas about other ways to resolve these problems."

Game and Parks believes the best way to manage big game populations is by hunting. In 2020, the agency has:

- increased antlerless deer tags across the state by 6% from 2019 quotas and 25% since 2017;
- increased doe/fawn antelope tags by 42%, adding a bonus doe/fawn tag to all landowner doe/fawn permits;
- increased antlerless elk tags by 40%; and
- lengthened antlerless elk season to Aug. 1, 2020 to Jan. 31, 2021 and added areas in every unit for landowner opportunity.

In 2019, antlerless deer units Frenchman and Loup East had lengthened seasons and met management goals of increasing antlerless harvest. This success is due largely to landowners allowing access to their land.

Landowners experiencing wildlife damage should contact their district Game and Parks office. A list of offices is available at [OutdoorNebraska.org/locations](http://OutdoorNebraska.org/locations). They can discuss options such as scare devices, damage control permits or opening lands to public access for hunting.

Landowners also may contact the agency about wildlife damage issues at [OutdoorNebraska.org/depredation](http://OutdoorNebraska.org/depredation) by filling out a Landowner Assistance Form.

Landowners, hunters and Game and Parks working together are the driving force for wildlife conservation in Nebraska. Landowners provide habitat and hunting access while hunters fund conservation by buying permits and stamps. Those funds are invested back into programs for private landowners that benefit wildlife and provide access for recreational opportunities, big game research, and maintaining 289 wildlife management areas that encompass 190,884 acres. Game and Parks is charged with managing all wildlife in the state. It strives to find a balance between healthy wildlife populations, hunting opportunities, and keeping deer and all game populations at socially acceptable levels.

Hunting has an \$848 million annual economic impact in Nebraska and supports nearly 9,000 jobs. Nebraska offers extraordinary mixed bag opportunities for hunting and watching wildlife.

### Thomas County Fair Plans

Planning is underway for the 2020 Thomas County Fair. The Thomas County Fairboard is working with West Central District Health Department in the planning. Watch the *Herald* for news, dates, and activities that are being planned.

## Nebraska Farm Bureau Announces 2020-2021 Class Of The Crew

Nebraska Farm Bureau (NEFB) has identified six social media savvy student members to join The Crew. The Crew participants share their love of agriculture through social media and are selected from NEFB's student members, who range in age from 16 to 25. Each member is selected in the spring and participates for one year.

The 2020-2021 class of The Crew represents county Farm Bureaus from across the state. They are: Jaycee Lapp and Abbie Brott of Hayes County; Emma Goosic, of Kearney/Franklin County; Makenna Eisenzimmer of Keith County; Abby Scholz of Phelps/Gosper County; and Abigail Lutjelusch of Colfax County.

"Nebraska Farm Bureau places high priority on training the next generation of agriculture leaders as part of our strategic plan. In coordination with NEFB student membership, The Crew provides an added benefit of being a student member and an opportunity to gain hands-on agriculture communications experiences. We are proud of this program and the growth it has shown," said Audrey Schipporeit, Nebraska Farm Bureau director of generational engagement. The ideal Crew member looks like this:

Supports and amplifies Nebraska Farm Bureau's messaging.

Creates original content to portray accurate agri-

culture messages. Participates in facilitated learning sessions from industry professionals.

Leads social media advocacy for their generation.

"During their year-long experience, Crew members, who come from across the state, work toward a series of milestones centered on social media sharing. In addition, they write a blog posts each for Nebraska Farm Bureau's Stories From the Field blog and attend 'field days' during which they gain hands-on agriculture communication experience and learn real-world applications of communication practices. We encourage folks to follow along this year as these students bring to

life rural America through their work on social media. Check out #neagcrew on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram," Schipporeit said.

The Nebraska Farm Bureau is a grassroots, statewide organization dedicated to supporting farm and ranch families and working for the benefit of all Nebraskans through a wide variety of educational, service and advocacy efforts. More than 58,000 families across Nebraska are Farm Bureau members, working together to achieve rural and urban prosperity as agriculture is a key fuel to Nebraska's economy. For more information about Nebraska Farm Bureau and agriculture, visit [www.nefb.org](http://www.nefb.org).