

Discussion chapter 6

[Science](#), [Biology](#)



Discussion Chapter 6 The US Congress A Concerned Citizen This letter is a request for Congress to replace the corn subsidy with a subsidy for grass to be used for bio-fuel. Studies have shown that growing food crops to produce ethanol is harmful to the environment (Runge , par 1). Furthermore according to research, using food crops such as corn and soybeans has a negative impact on the world's poor because it drives the prices of these commodities upward. A study by the U. S. National Academy of Sciences in 2007 reveals that growing corn to produce ethanol consumes 200 times more water than the water to process corn into ethanol (Runge , par 12). In the long-run, the country will be facing a water shortage due to huge volume needed to support the processing of grains into ethanol. Another problem that the country may be confronted with is the rising corn acreage which demands extensive fertilization (Runge). Fertilization adds nitrogen and phosphorous into the lakes and streams; thus, resulting in the eventual destruction of aquatic life (Runge , par 13).

In view of the above, it is proposed that the corn subsidy be instead transferred to subsidy in grass to produce bio-fuel. A major advantage of using grass, particularly switchgrass is that it grows easily. It does not require fertile land unlike other food crops. Since grass is not consumed by humans, it will not have any effect on food prices, unlike that of corn. If the change is implemented, then the debate between fuel and food is eliminated (Bionomicfuel. com 1). An increase in subsidy for switchgrass will even encourage farmers to plant this type of grass in land which are not used for agricultural production.

Given the scenarios above, it is highly recommended that the subsidy for

corn as source of bio-fuel be totally abolished and replaced by a subsidy for grass.

Works Cited

Bionomicfuel. com. " What is switchgrass ethanol?" n. d. bionomicfuel. com. Web. 5 June 2012 .

Runge, C. Ford. " The case against biofuels: Probing ethanol's hidden cost." 11 March 2010. e360. yale. edu. Web. 5 June 2012 .