



Farm Bill Energy Title

Q: Senator Harkin, local co-ops across Iowa and the Midwest are building ethanol plants, cultivating switch grass and turning soybeans into diesel fuel and industrial lubricants. It seems that we are beginning a new generation of uses for agricultural commodities. What does the new farm bill do to support this movement?

The farm bill's renewable energy and energy efficiency provisions will boost farm income, provide new markets for agricultural commodities, create jobs, revitalize rural communities, increase energy security, and enhance public health and the environment.

A: The new farm bill will do a great deal to help develop Iowa's clean energy resources. Clean energy, including biofuels like ethanol and biodiesel, wind and solar power and biomass, are "cash crops" that can provide new income streams for farmers and rural communities, create jobs, and help protect the environment by reducing pollution. Energy efficiency opportunities abound in the agricultural sector as well, and are the cheapest, easiest and most effective way to reduce costs.

Since I first began working on this farm bill I said that it needed to include incentives for renewable energy production. I'm happy to say the farm bill provides more than \$400 million to develop new markets for farm based, value-added products. The potential of this effort is limitless. Today a company in Blair, Nebraska is providing McDonald's with coffee cups made from soybeans and another company in Waverly, Iowa will supply the Norfolk Southern railroad with grease, made from soybeans to use on all their trains nationwide. There is a tremendous market for these products and one of the biggest purchasers, according to this farm bill, will be the federal government.

One of the lesser publicized provisions in this farm bill, which I included, is a requirement that the federal government give a purchasing preference to biobased products. The federal government is the single largest consumer we have in this country and they should lead by example. Just imagine the demand if the Pentagon used only coffee cups made of soybeans, or if the Defense Department used soy lubricants in all their trucks. That's what this farm bill says should happen, and as Chairman, I plan on seeing that it does.

It is a new day for Iowa's agricultural producers and rural communities. The farm bill's renewable energy and energy efficiency provisions will boost farm income, provide new markets for agricultural commodities, create jobs, revitalize rural communities, increase energy security, and enhance public health and the environment. These provisions offer a winning strategy for our farmers and for the country.