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## Other views: AP report on ethanol study lacked balance, credibility

By Jocie Iszler, The Forum  
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At a time when millions of American consumers are urging their lawmakers to bolster the use of homegrown renewable fuels, researchers **David Pimentel and Tad Patzek remain firmly entrenched in the big oil rut.** Why does the Associated Press continue to lend credibility to the pair's ethanol energy balance research when it has been disproven time and time again?

Mark Johnson's most recent AP article reports on the recent work (regurgitation of 25-year-old data) of Pimentel **(an entomologist with ties to the petroleum industry)** and Patzek **(a former Shell Oil employee)** as if it is the gospel truth.

Pimentel's studies have been routinely discredited by officials from the Departments of Energy and Agriculture, as well as **numerous independent researchers.** Since 1995, 12 major studies on the energy balance of ethanol have been conducted and only three - all of which are authored by Pimentel - found the fuel to have a negative energy balance.

The **truth is a gallon of ethanol contains at least 67 percent more energy** than it takes to produce, according to the USDA. Additionally, ethanol helps reduce harmful tailpipe emissions, contributes to U.S. energy security by displacing foreign oil and spurs rural economic development.

Why didn't Johnson seek out the opinion of at least one other researcher who has studied this issue to lend some balance to his story? It's interesting to note that this most recent resurgence of 25-year-old data by Pimentel has appeared soon after the Senate overwhelming passed the Energy Bill including an 8 billion gallon per year renewable fuel standard. The Energy Bill is now in the House where ethanol supporters are urging their House Representatives to keep the 8 billion gallon standard as part of the Energy Bill.

Last week the president of the North Dakota Corn Growers Association, Mike Clemens, Wimbledon, North Dakota Corn

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Council Director Bart Schott, Kulm, and I were in Washington, D.C., working on crop insurance issues. Our visits to our congressional delegation indicated that their support for the 8 billion gallon per year renewable fuel standard is strong.

Ethanol is much more than a Midwest corn belt issue. **The wisdom of an ethanol fuels provision has not been lost on senators from the East and West Coasts. That's why beyond-the-Corn Belt senators from Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, Washington and Oregon voted in favor of a solution that helps lessen our dependence on foreign oil, improves our environment and creates jobs in America.**

**Iszler is executive director of the N.D. Corn Council.**

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