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Pennsylvania's need to go green



(<http://connect.pennlive.com/user/courogen/index.html>) By **Carrie Courogen**
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on January 08, 2008 at 3:19 PM, updated January 08, 2008 at 3:49 PM

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CAITLIN UHRINChristy Lambert,15 and Daniel Miller, 16, create biodiesel fuel of the future during the State Farm Show Monday. This year's Pennsylvania Farm Show is going, going, going... green. With renewable energy a hot topic in everyone's mind, this year you can expect to see several displays in the Exposition Hall related to the subject.



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While solar and wind energy are in focus, the popular target is all about foreign fuel, and how we can get away from it. Imported oil makes up for about 60% of all oil used for domestic consumption, a percentage that can be lowered with the help of biofuels, exhibitors indicate.

Crowds swarmed alternative energy exhibits perhaps because of the publicity Governor Edward G. Rendell gave to his Alternative Energy Bill at the Farm Show's kick off.

Joe Perez from The Pennsylvania State University Agricultural and Biological Engineering Department backs the bill.

"I think there's a need for this type of funding to pursue alternative sources of energy, and I think this bill will help tremendously," said Perez.

Mark Antle, also with Penn State, thinks the potential for Pennsylvania crops as biofuels will make a difference. His program pushes the idea of using crops such as corn, barley and switchgrass to create the gasoline alternative ethanol, alternative energy's "it" product of the moment.

Antle's sure that some of the crops they're producing will ultimately get to the final goal of reducing dependence on foreign oil.

While ethanol may not be the final answer, "what we're doing right now can help in a small, but significant way," said Antle.

Rick Ulrich from Kennett Square, Chester county, works with Green Renewable Energy, Ethanol, and Nutrition - Holding, LLC. In its second year with the Farm Show, he's noticed that this year's exhibit is seeing a much larger audience.

"This project has been growing for about two years, and we hope to be funded this year to build an ethanol plant in central Pennsylvania," Ulrich said.

Jim Davis of Swarthmore is just one of many with a newly acquired interest in alternative energy. Although most of the given information is new to him, the displays did motivate him to get more information.

Alternative energy is the "wave of the future," Davis said.

"It's probably very good for our country to be less dependent on foreign oil with biofuel," he said.

Bonnie Rebeck of Sunbury agrees. While she's interested in knowing what alternatives

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are available, she's a bit skeptical about finances especially when it comes to biofuel.

"I know that it's something we need to be looking into, but I know that it also costs a lot to do, environmentally," said Rebeck.

"I think we need to look into that instead of supporting [foreign oil], but it's not the complete answer," said Rebeck, then paused, and added, "Yet."

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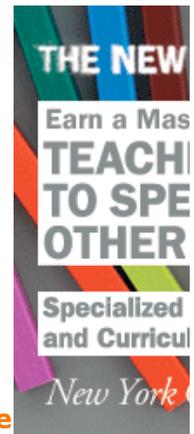
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