

E15 (UNL88): Frequently Asked Questions

With high inflation and volatile gas prices, American drivers are increasingly relying on the fuel savings offered by E15 (UNL88), a fuel containing 15 percent American ethanol. Compared to standard 10 percent blends (E10), E15 saved American drivers an average savings of up to 30¢ per gallon¹ — all while increasing U.S. energy security and supporting economic growth across rural America.

Unfortunately, these cost savings could vanish from many markets as early as May 1 of this year due to outdated federal restrictions on summer sales of higher ethanol blends.

For the last seven years, American drivers have uninterrupted access to E15 year-round based on actions taken by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In January 2025, President Trump issued an executive order (EO) declaring a national emergency over energy, which, in Section 2(b) of the EO, orders EPA to “consider issuing emergency fuel waivers to allow the year-round sale of E15 gasoline to meet any projected temporary shortfalls in the supply of gasoline across the Nation.”



Why we Need a Legislative Fix

With summer fast approaching, EPA must act swiftly to ensure that lower-cost E15 remains available to motorists. Emergency waivers will provide temporary relief while Congress works toward approving legislation to permanently allow the year-round, nationwide sale of E15.

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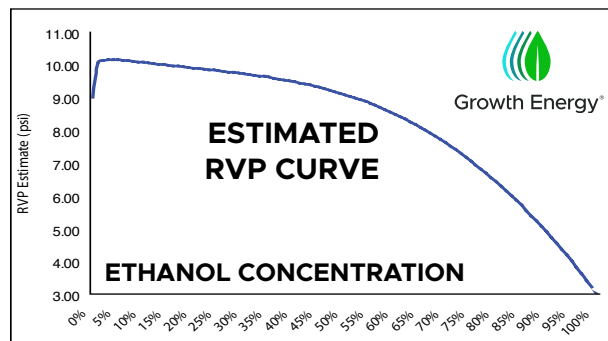
¹ Growth Energy, Renewable Fuels Association, National Corn Growers Association, et al., Letter to Congressional Leadership, “Pass a Year-Round E15 Legislative Solution as Soon as Possible,” January 7, 2026.



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Q: Why is E15 restricted during the summer?

A: Fuel – like any liquid – evaporates more quickly in warmer weather, and when it does evaporate, it can contribute to the creation of smog-forming emissions. That is why limits on evaporative emissions, or Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP), are more stringent during the summer months. But those regulations were crafted more than 20 years before EPA approved the use of E15. In an amendment to the Clean Air Act in 1990, Congress specified that fuel with 10% ethanol (E10 or regular) could be sold year-round to encourage the use of ethanol-blended fuels, which provide significant reductions in tailpipe and carbon emissions. However, the RVP waiver that Congress granted, E10 was never extended to higher blends – despite E15 being a cleaner fuel with lower evaporative emissions.²



Sam R. Reddy (General Motors Research and Development Center), "A Model for Estimating Vapor Pressures of Commingled Ethanol Fuels," SAE Technical Paper 2007-01-4006, SAE International, October 29, 2007.

Q: Didn't the EPA already update the regulations on E15?

A: During President Trump's first term, EPA updated RVP rules to reflect the air quality benefits of E15. However, those changes were overturned as a result of oil industry litigation, and E15 is once again subject to a more stringent summertime vapor pressure standard than regular E10 gasoline – despite being a cleaner fuel with lower evaporative emissions.

In response, EPA has issued a series of temporary waivers allowing E15 to remain on the market for the past seven years. This year should be no different. EPA actions on an emergency waiver will deliver temporary relief for consumers, but Congress has an opportunity to shield U.S. consumers from volatility with lower-cost, American-made fuel. E15 can unlock billions in fuel savings while enhancing America's energy security.

Q: Can anyone use E15 in their car?

A: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has approved E15 fuel for all light-duty vehicles model year 2001 and newer.³ That's more than 96 percent of the vehicles on the road today or more than 245 million cars and trucks, accounting for 98 percent of all vehicle miles traveled.

E15: Approved for 96 percent of Vehicles on the Road Today⁴

245+

Million Vehicles

98%

of Vehicle Miles Traveled



² Reddy, Sam R. "A Model for Estimating Vapor Pressures of Commingled Ethanol Fuels," SAE Technical Papers on CD-ROM/SAE Technical Paper Series 1, October 29, 2007.

³ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "E15 Fuel Registration," October 8, 2025.

⁴ Air Improvement Resource, Inc., "Analysis of Ethanol-Compatible Fleet for Calendar Year 2022," November 16, 2021.

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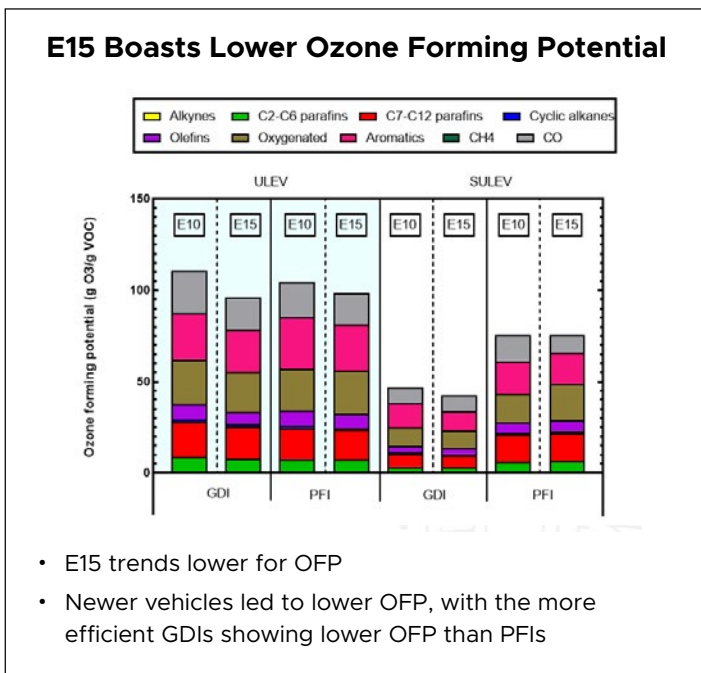
Q: Does E15 contribute to an increase in smog?

A: No. E15 actually reduces the emission of smog-forming pollutants more than E10. This question was settled a decade ago when the Department of Energy (DOE)/ National Renewable Energy Laboratory tested cars on E15 and E20 blends, and found that these fuels either produced no change or lowered smog-forming emissions.

Increased ethanol content means less pollution and healthier communities. A study by the University of California Riverside⁸ found that ethanol blends reduce toxic emissions, including lowering ozone forming potential and significant reductions of harmful particulates that contribute to smog. Clean-burning biofuels also help lower other tailpipe emissions — including carbon monoxide and toxic chemicals — resulting in cleaner air and a healthier environment.

At the same time, ethanol reduces GHG emissions by 46 percent compared to regular gasoline, making biofuels a key to achieving cleaner air.⁹ As a result, nationwide adoption of E15 could cut GHG emissions by 17.62 million tons per year, which is the equivalent of removing approximately 3.85 million vehicles from the road.

That’s why a permanent fix is so important. We can’t let outdated regulations stand in the way.



University of California, Riverside, Bourns College of Engineering – Center for Environmental Research and Technology (CE-CERT), “[Comparison of Exhaust Emissions Between E10 CaRFG and Splash Blended E15](#),” California Air Resources Board, June 2022

Q: Will the emergency waiver raise the cost of food?

A: No. Prices at the grocery store are driven predominantly by factors like transportation, processing, packaging, and marketing — not the value of farm commodities. In fact, one of the biggest determinants of food cost is crude oil, the prices of which are set by global markets and which strongly impact the prices of other goods. Continued innovation in America’s agriculture sector and improved farming methods have also increased efficiency and yield for corn crops. Less inputs are required to produce corn now, and the amount of corn being harvested from the same amount of acreage has skyrocketed — reflecting cutting-edge innovations on the farm. Furthermore, ethanol production doesn’t only result in fuel; it also generates a nutrient-rich animal feed. That, in itself, has a positive effect on the food supply, food prices, and land use.

The animal feed generated from ethanol production includes protein, mineral, vitamins, and fiber, and is used by dairy, beef, swine, and poultry producers, among others.

Finally, the corn used to produce ethanol isn’t the same corn you find at the grocery store. The corn used to make ethanol is not intended for human consumption and is distinct from the sweet corn found on grocery shelves.

⁸ University of California, Riverside, Bourns College of Engineering – Center for Environmental Research and Technology (CE-CERT), “[Comparison of Exhaust Emissions Between E10 CaRFG and Splash Blended E15](#),” California Air Resources Board, June 2022.

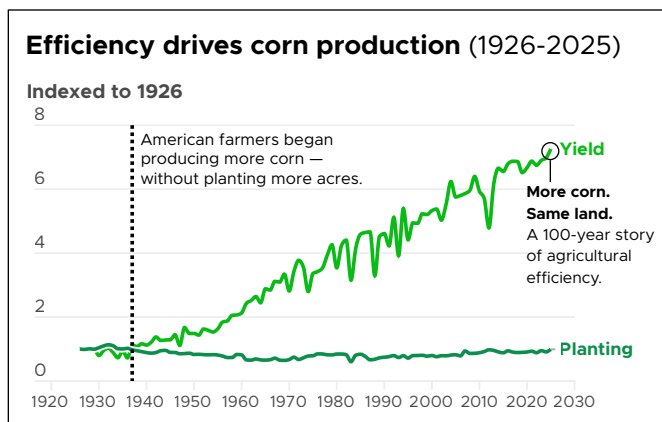
⁹ Melissa J. Scully, Gregory A. Norris, Tania M. Alarcon Falconi, and David L. MacIntosh. March 10, 2021. “[Carbon Intensity of Corn Ethanol in the United States: State of the Science](#),” *Environmental Research Letters* 16 (4): 043001.



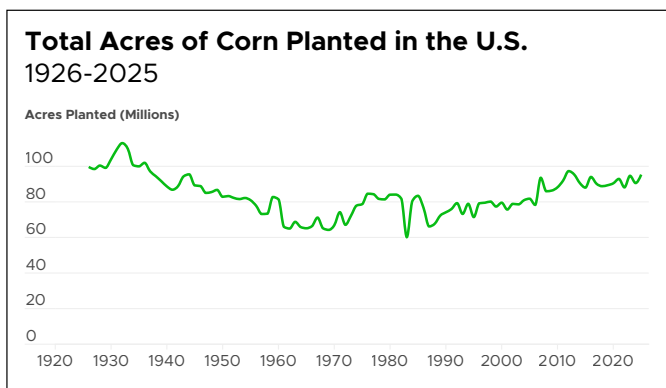
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Q: Will the use of summertime E15 increase land use acreage devoted to agriculture?

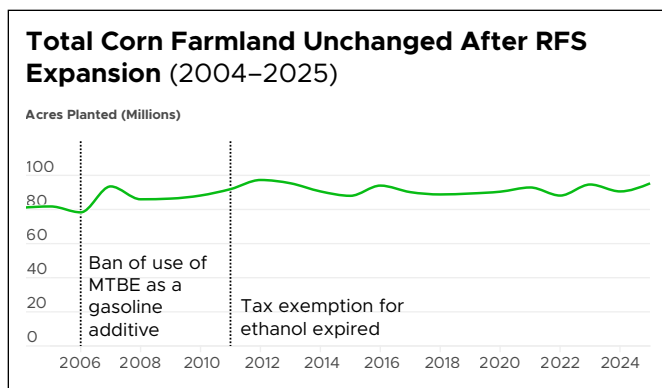
A: No. Compared to the 1930s, farmers today grow five times as much corn using 20 percent less acreage. America’s agriculture sector continues to improve farming methods to increase efficiencies and yield, lowering the amount of energy needed to produce a bushel of corn. Corn acres have fallen since 2007, the first year the modern Renewable Fuel Standard was implemented, yet yields continue to increase.



SOURCE: USDA NASS



SOURCE: USDA NASS



SOURCE: USDA NASS, Ramboll (2023, February). *Review of Environmental Effects and Economic Analysis of Corn Prices: EPA’s Proposed RFS Standards for 2023-2025.*

Q: Does the emergency waiver mandate use of E15?

A: No. The waiver simply allows more retailers to offer a lower-cost option at the pump during the summer driving season. As a result, consumers will continue to enjoy the same choices they have during the rest of the year.

Q: Will E15 reduce my vehicle mileage?

A: Ethanol is the best available source of octane. It is the cleanest, most affordable high-octane fuel on the market. It provides a superior octane boost without the carcinogens associated with other fuel additives. As a result, E15 increases performance, while any change in fuel economy between E10 and E15 is negligible.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) agrees, noting that its research “showed no statistically significant loss of vehicle performance (emissions, fuel economy, and maintenance issues) attributable to the use of E15 fuel compared to straight gasoline.”¹⁰

10 Davis, Patrick and Department of Energy, “Getting It Right: Accurate Testing and Assessments Critical to Deploying the Next Generation of Auto Fuels,” May 16, 2012.



