

FEATURE –USDA TESTS HYDROGEN POWERED CAR

INTRO: General Motors is giving USDA a hydrogen powered car to test drive for two months. The U-S-D-A's Bob Ellison has more. (1:35)

THIS COULD BE THE FUTURE OF AUTOMOBILES. THIS HYDROGEN POWERED GENERAL MOTORS TEST VEHICLE IS ON LOAN TO THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR A TWO MONTH TEST DRIVE. AGRICULTURE SECRETARY ED SCHAFER WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE CAR THAT HE SAID OFFERS GREAT ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS.

Ed Schafer, Agriculture Secretary: The important thing is it's powered by a technology that uses no gasoline or petro-chemical fuels at all and it releases no greenhouse gases.

WHILE THE FUEL CELL EQUINOX LOOKS THE SAME AS REGULAR VEHICLES ON THE OUTSIDE...INSIDE IT'S VERY DIFFERENT.

Monica Murphy, General Motors Spokesperson: So we are minus an engine. We are minus a transmission. We have no use of petroleum in the vehicle and in fact we have ninety percent less moving parts under the hood. The byproducts of the whole process are heat and water and zero greenhouse gas emission.

SCHAFER SAID THE POTENTIAL NEED FOR HYDROGEN TO POWER FUEL CELL VEHICLES OFFERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO U-S FARMERS.

Schafer: Right now almost all of the hydrogen produced today comes from natural gas. But research is now underway to produce it from a variety of sources including biomass from agriculture residues...and also crops that are growing specifically for energy use.

SO HOW DOES IT DRIVE? SECRETARY SCHAFER WAS EAGER TO FIND OUT.

Schafer: So let's find those keys and get the car on the road.

G-M IS LOANING THE FUEL CELL VEHICLES TO U-S-D-A AND OTHER FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS TO RAISE PUBLIC ATTENTION AND LEARN HOW THEY PERFORM WITH FREQUENT USE. THE COMPANY HOPES TO HAVE THE FUEL CELL VEHICLE ON SALE TO THE PUBLIC IN TWO THOUSAND TEN. IN WASHINGTON FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON.