



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

TO: Subcabinet Officials
Agency Heads
Staff Office Directors

FROM: Secretary Sonny Perdue

SUBJECT: USDA Fleet and Biofuels

DATE: February 28, 2020

USDA owns and operates one of the largest civilian fleets in the Federal Government. As we strive to meet Federal mandates to acquire alternative fueled vehicles (AFV) and decrease the number of conventionally fueled vehicles, there are measures USDA must take to increase the number of biofuel-capable vehicles, and the use of biofuels, in our fleet operation.

USDA vehicles are used to support our missions, including food safety inspections, agricultural research, fire prevention/suppression and law enforcement. Over the last year, we have made significant progress in right-sizing our fleet. As we begin 2020, it is important to emphasize the continued work needed to ensure our focus on efficient federal operations in all areas as outlined by the law, regulations and policy.

The FY2019 annual fleet report indicates that USDA has over 16,000 flexible-fuel vehicles in its fleet that can operate on gasoline or E85. Additionally, USDA has over 3,700 diesel fuel vehicles that can operate on biodiesel blends at appropriate locations. Finally, the gasoline powered component of the USDA fleet consists of 14,000 vehicles that are of post-2000 vintage. These vehicles are E15 compatible. Although those flex-fuel and diesel fuel categories comprise more than half of the Department's fleet, biofuel consumption comprises less than 4 percent of USDA's annual fuel use. The costs and efficiencies of biofuels are comparable with conventional fuels, there are no additional costs needed to acquire these vehicles, and biofuels reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

While USDA has made significant progress in acquiring AFVs that can use E85 or biodiesel, we must take the necessary steps to increase biofuels use. To emphasize USDA's continued support for biofuels, and to enhance efforts to increase the use of biofuels in the USDA fleet, I am directing Mission Areas/Agencies with fleet operations to:

- Acquire E85- or biodiesel-capable vehicles that meet USDA mission requirements.
 - That includes informing the General Services Administration of the desire to acquire the E85 or biodiesel vehicle alternative, whenever practical.

- Use station locator websites and apps from the Department of Energy, Prime the Pump, National Biodiesel Board and other organizations to increase the consumption of E15, E85, and biodiesel.
- (<https://afdc.energy.gov/stations/#/find/nearest>, <https://getbiofuel.com/fuel-finder/>, <https://www.biodiesel.org/using-biodiesel/finding-biodiesel/retail-locations/retail-map>)
- Prioritize the purchase of E15 for gasoline vehicles without E85 capability and the purchase of renewable diesel blends for diesel vehicles without B20 capability
- For USDA locations that have in-house refueling pumps, coordinate with fuel vendors to acquire and provide biofuel blends, including E15, E85, B20 and higher biodiesel blends, and renewable diesel blends. Ensure that fuel prices appropriately reflect the values of Renewable Identification Numbers (RINs), the biodiesel blending tax credit, and California Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) credits.
- Continue adherence to Executive Order 13834 - *Efficient Federal Operations* (May 17, 2018) and its implementing instructions, which established progress metrics, requirements and priority strategies for vehicle acquisition and fuel use.
(https://www.sustainability.gov/pdfs/eo13834_instructions.pdf)

These actions have the potential to increase USDA's annual consumption of E15 by 9 million gallons, E85 by 10 million gallons, and biodiesel and renewable diesel blends by 3 million gallons. As availability of E15, E85, and biodiesel expands through the nation, we have the opportunity to reach these goals and have a significant impact. Where biofuels are available the USDA fleet is directed to use biofuels.

Thank you for supporting the Department's efforts to reduce vehicle inventories and increase our use of biofuels.

If you or your staff have any additional questions regarding this initiative, please feel free to contact Scott Davis, Director, Office of Property and Fleet Management at (202) 720-4765, or at scott.w.davis@usda.gov.



Sonny Perdue, Secretary

cc: Mission Area Chief of Staffs
 Business Center Chief Operating Officers
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 Joby Young, Chief of Staff to the Secretary
 Kailee Tkacz, Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary