

From Grain to Gas: A Guide to Ethanol at the Pump

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Ethanol is leading the charge in the shift towards renewable biofuels. Derived from starch- and sugar-based feedstocks, this versatile, biodegradability, low carbon, fuel has captured the attention of policymakers and eco-conscious consumers alike. This article delves into the process of acquiring ethanol for distribution, examining purchasing methods, and current funding opportunities driving the field forward.

Let's begin with a discussion of a funding opportunity by the US Department of Agriculture. Ethanol distributors have an opportunity to leverage potential grant programs, such as the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP), to advance their biofuel initiatives. This US Department of Agriculture initiative offers financial support to expand the availability of higher blends of ethanol, like E15 and E85, at retail gas stations. Through this program, distributors can receive grants to offset the costs of installing or retrofitting infrastructure required for the storage and dispensing of higher ethanol blends. Embracing such grant opportunities not only fosters the growth of the ethanol market but also demonstrates a commitment to sustainability and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. By capitalizing on HBIIP and similar incentives, ethanol distributors can pave the way for a greener future while enhancing their business prospects in the evolving energy landscape.

In the pursuit of environmentally conscious energy solutions, gas distributors are exploring the viability of higher blends of ethanol as fuel options. This would include selling 88-unleaded (15 percent ethanol) and flexfuel (85 percent ethanol, 15 percent unleaded). The process of acquiring ethanol begins by assessing equipment requirements and seeking reputable suppliers. Fuel contracts ensure that favorable purchase agreements, and transportation logistics are arranged. By complying with regulations and conducting quality checks, ethanol can be blended reliably with gasoline at the facility. As this eco-friendly blended fuel makes its way to gas stations, consumers can make greener choices at the pump.

Gas distributors typically purchase ethanol through contracts or agreements with ethanol producers, distributors, or blending facilities. They can secure ethanol directly from production facilities or opt for the services of intermediaries who specialize in ethanol distribution. In regions with established ethanol markets, gas distributors may participate in ethanol exchanges or spot markets to buy ethanol based on current market prices. Additionally, government incentives, subsidies, or tax credits may further influence the economics of ethanol purchases for gasoline blending. The specific method of purchasing ethanol may vary based on local regulations, market dynamics, and the availability of ethanol as a biofuel in the region.

Ethanol's rise as a renewable biofuel has captured the attention of policymakers and consumers. Its low carbon emissions and versatility make it a promising cleaner alternative to traditional gasoline. Gas distributors' exploration of ethanol as a biofuel and their engagement with incentives like HBIIP are crucial for advancing sustainability and promoting a greener energy future. Together, these efforts pave the way for a cleaner energy landscape and a more sustainable future. Ask for it where you purchase your fuel.