



YEAR IN REVIEW

2024



RFA

2024

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Chairman

Erik Huschitt

Badger State

Ethanol LLC

Vice Chairman

Jeff Oestmann

Aztalan Bio LLC

Treasurer

Mike Jerke

Southwest Iowa

Renewable Energy LLC

Secretary

Rick Schwarck

Absolute Energy LLC

President

Geoff Cooper

Renewable Fuels

Association

Neal Kemmet, Ace Ethanol, LLC/Fox River Valley Ethanol LLC

Bill Howell, Adkins Energy, LLC

Eric McAfee, Aemetis, Inc.

Thomas Harwood, Al-Corn Clean Fuel, LLC

David Zimmerman, Big River Resources, LLC

Lyle Schlyer, Calgren Renewable Fuels

Wayne Garrett, Chief Ethanol Fuels, Inc.

Chad Friese, Chippewa Valley Ethanol Co.

Sean Broderick, CHS, Inc.

Ryan Drook, CIE

Mick Henderson, Commonwealth Agri-Energy, LLC

Scott Mundt, Dakota Ethanol, LLC

Jon Cosby, E Energy Adams, LLC

Bill Pracht, East Kansas Agri-Energy, LLC

Nick Bowdish, Elite Octane, LLC

Kathy Bergren, Gevo, Inc. *

Dave Sovereign, Golden Grain Energy, LLC

Mark Ricketts, Grain Processing Corp.

Michael Green, Granite Falls Energy, LLC/Heron Lake BioEnergy, LLC

Eric Fobes, GreenAmerica Biofuels Ord LLC

Jeanne McCaherty, Guardian Energy, LLC

Tom Paitrick, Heartland Corn Products

Brian Kletscher, Highwater Ethanol, LLC

Seth Harder, Husker Ag, LLC/Lincolnway Energy, LLC

Chris Mitchell, ICM, Inc.

Chuck Woodside, KAAPA Ethanol Holdings, LLC

Alex Menotti, LanzaJet *

Eric Mosbey, Lincolnland Agri-Energy, LLC

Prestin Read, Mid America Bio Energy

Chris Wilson, Mid-Missouri Energy, Inc.

Kelly Davis, New Energy Blue *

Ed Stewart, Parallel Products Inc.

Eric Baukol, Redfield Energy, LLC

Walt Wendland, Ringneck Energy

Taichi Yamakawa, Sumitomo Corporation of Americas *

Dan Short, The Anderson Marathon Holdings LLC

Tony Leiding, Trenton Agri Products, LLC

Tim Winters, Western New York Energy, LLC

Derek Peine, Western Plains Energy, LLC

**Prospective Producer Members*

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Throughout the year, RFA spearheaded the effort to ensure **Inflation Reduction Act tax credits** (45Z and 40B) allow ethanol producers to fairly participate. Through dozens of agency meetings, detailed technical comments, legislative advocacy, and other strategies, RFA tirelessly pursued accurate carbon intensity modeling, workable registration and reporting rules, and sensible supply chain management approaches (like book-and-claim) for climate-smart feedstocks.

RFA again succeeded in securing emergency waivers to allow the **sale of E15 throughout the summer**. We made the technical case to EPA; we worked with supporters in Congress; we launched PR and advertising inside the Beltway; and we activated the grassroots to weigh in. RFA also continued to lead a diverse coalition advocating for a permanent legislative solution allowing year-round E15. And we continued to provide technical and legal support to the eight Midwest states that were approved by EPA to offer E15 year-round starting in 2025.

RFA relentlessly encouraged the Biden administration to abandon its flawed proposal for **2027-2032 vehicle tailpipe standards**, which would essentially mandate electric vehicles and phase out internal combustion engines. Through extensive comments, studies, and face-to-face meetings, we showed that increasing the use of ethanol and FFVs could deliver greater emissions benefits at a lower cost. When EPA ignored our input and finalized their tailpipe standards, we partnered with the National Farmers Union to challenge EPA's unlawful standards in court.

Through our **Ford Escape plug-in hybrid FFV** project, we continued to demonstrate the benefits of allowing the marketplace to combine the best of both worlds. RFA released a study highlighting the real-world environmental and economic benefits of the PHEFFV after 34,000 miles of testing.

Standing up for the **Renewable Fuel Standard** remains a top priority for RFA. We continued to defend the RFS in several court cases, including challenges over EPA's approach on small refinery exemptions.

RFA also scored a victory when the courts upheld EPA's 2020-2022 RFS volumes and rejected faulty arguments from oil refiners and environmentalists.

Our push to secure **E15 approval and favorable LCFS revisions in California** accelerated in 2024. CARB approved the results of our E15 emissions testing but continued to delay issuing regulations to allow the fuel—even after RFA sponsored a UC Berkeley study showing E15 would save the state \$2.7 billion.

RFA continued to lead efforts to create a favorable policy and regulatory environment for **ethanol-based sustainable aviation fuels**. We were a founding member of the new SAF Coalition; we worked with Congressional SAF champions on numerous legislative issues and new bills; and we even spearheaded the U.S. effort to challenge a new EU regulation that would essentially ban SAF made from crop-based biofuels like ethanol.

RFA successfully assisted dozens of fuel retailers and marketers seeking E15 and E85 infrastructure grants through USDA's **Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program**. Since 2020, RFA has secured more than \$419 million in funding for 177 companies in 28 states for the installation or conversion of more than 4,600 dispensers at 890 retail locations.

RFA launched **Veterans for Renewable Fuels**, a new initiative designed specifically for military veterans and immediate family members working in the U.S. ethanol industry. Its purpose is to recognize and celebrate their contributions and provide them with opportunities to network and support one another.

RFA welcomed three producer members this fiscal year: Elite Octane, Parallel Products, The Andersons Marathon Holdings; **and 23 associate members**: Antora Energy, Aon Risk Services, Bestzyme, BKV, Carbogenesis, Cereal Process Technologies, CF Industries, Enerflex, Innospec Fuel Specialties, iRely, Lucas E3, Mickelson & Co., MISTRAS, Nataqua, Ocean Park, Octent Automation, PurposeEnergy, Scoular, Separator Technology Solutions, Skyven Technologies, Specialist Nutrition, StormFisher Hydrogen, and Superior Environmental Solutions.

FALL 2023: STARTING OFF RIGHT WITH RENEWED ENERGY

October

In a letter to the [California Air Resources Board](#), RFA called for expeditious approval of E15 gasoline blends, noting that the state's failure to approve the fuel has caused unnecessary increases in greenhouse gas emissions and tailpipe pollution, as well as higher prices at the pump. The letter got a swift response from CARB and reopened the dialog about next steps for E15 in the Golden State.

RFA technical comments challenged the [U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's](#) proposed new fuel economy standards for 2027-2032, stating that the proposal would lead to an overreliance on foreign critical minerals due to its myopic dependence on electric vehicles.

RFA participated in a forum examining the potential for a [national low carbon fuel standard](#) convened by the Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington.

Staff joined more than 400 ministerial-level officials and industry stakeholders from over 40 countries in mid-October at the [Global Ethanol Summit](#), a three-day symposium promoting increased global ethanol use. The Virginia event was co-sponsored by RFA.

In a seminar for members, Justin Schultz and Tad Hepner introduced [emerging cybersecurity trends](#) and explored tools and tactics that ethanol plant personnel can implement to safeguard against potential threats. Schultz



Above: Troy Bredenkamp speaks about the importance of E15 at a Congressional Western Caucus meeting. Below: Geoff Cooper wrote about saving money with ethanol in a guest blog for *The Hill*.

OPINION > CONGRESS BLOG

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS ARE THEIR OWN AND NOT THE VIEW OF THE HILL

Renewable fuels make holiday travel easier on the pocket — and the planet

BY GEOFF COOPER, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR · 11/22/23 1:30 PM ET



As we watch the days get shorter and the weather get colder, it can only mean one thing — the holidays are almost upon us.

Most Popular

- 1 Republicans urge Trump to accept second debate against Harris
- 2 Greene, Loomer get into back-and-forth over 'racist' Harris...
- 3 GOP pollster Frank Luntz: Debate will cost Trump the election
- 4 GOP senators express frustration with Trump's performance ...

also led a separate member seminar on emergency preparedness, covering mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

November

RFA continued to lead efforts to [secure year-round E15](#) with a series of high-level administration and Hill meetings, including a Western Caucus E15 briefing with the American Petroleum Institute, National Association of



Above: Geoff Cooper and Robert White take part in dozens of media interviews during the annual National Association of Farm Broadcasting convention in Kansas City. At left: Cooper speaks at the Global Ethanol Summit in October.

fuels.”

Tad Hepner kicked off RFA’s **Strategy & Innovation Webinar Series**, which highlights new technologies and opportunities for lowering CI, improving efficiency, developing alternative uses for ethanol and coproducts, and tapping into funding programs to offset capital expenditures.

Scott Richman published a study showing that **2023 summertime sales of E15 were up 10%** over the same period in 2022. Consumers choosing E15 saved at the pump, thanks to EPA’s emergency waivers.

Geoff Cooper presented on the challenges of integrating lifecycle analysis into energy and climate policy at a meeting of the **Southwest Research Institute**. Cooper promoted using a uniform, consistent, and transparent approach to LCA (like DOE’s GREET model) across all GHG regulations.

RFA kicked off a groundbreaking partnership with **Girls Auto Clinic** to lead the way in bringing ethanol education and promotion to a new and growing audience—women actively interested in auto purchasing, maintenance, and repair.

As leaders from around the world convened for the **2023 U.N. climate change conference (COP28)**, we called on U.S. delegates to “prominently highlight the U.S. biofuels industry’s remarkable contributions to the fight against global climate change.” In a letter, RFA asked climate envoy John Kerry to “...ensure renewable biofuels like ethanol are explicitly included in our nation’s plans to meet future GHG emissions reduction commitments.” We also included a white paper detailing ethanol’s low-carbon benefits and the road ahead toward fully carbon-neutral ethanol.

Convenience Stores and others.

RFA launched **Veterans for Renewable Fuels**, a new initiative designed specifically for military veterans and immediate family members working in the U.S. ethanol industry. Its purpose is to recognize and celebrate the contributions of military veterans in the industry and provide them with opportunities to network and support one another in their careers and personal lives.

More than 30 RFA member companies were among 70 industry leaders who sent a letter calling on the Biden administration to unleash progress in de-carbonizing aviation by recognizing the DOE’s Argonne GREET model under Section 40B(e) of the Inflation Reduction Act.

RFA celebrated the introduction of the **Flex Fuel Fairness Act**, which pro-

motes increased production of flex fuel vehicles in the U.S. This legislation, which evolved from an RFA concept, would give automakers more ways to comply with increasingly stringent vehicle emissions standards while leveling the playing field for all clean vehicle technologies.

RFA staff participated in the **National Association of Farm Broadcasting’s** annual convention in Kansas City, where they took part in dozens of interviews on hot topics with farm broadcasters. RFA is a sponsor of this event, which draws over 100 reporters each year.

The Hill featured an essay by Geoff Cooper on how ethanol helps travelers **save money at the gas pump** during the holiday season: “The benefits of ethanol are there for taking, but it all starts with strengthening our commitment to renewable



Two delegations of key officials from Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) visited with RFA's Washington office in December. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity for Japanese officials to exchange views with the RFA regarding important issues such as direct blending, equipment compatibility, and the status of compliance efforts with biofuel standards.

December

Geoff Cooper and Troy Bredenkamp met with top White House officials to convey the urgency of finalizing EPA's proposed approval of a request from eight governors to allow year-round sales of E15 in their states.

RFA welcomed the Treasury Department's release of initial guidance regarding the implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act's sustainable aviation fuel tax credit (40B). The guidance clarified that a soon-to-be-updated version of the Department of Energy's GREET model would be among the methodologies used to determine eligibility for the tax credit. RFA worked hard to ensure GREET would be included as an allowable model.

The Hill publication recognized Geoff Cooper as one of 2023's top lobbyists, the only ethanol industry rep to be so honored, and the fifth time he has been so named. From congressional testimony to behind-the-scenes counsel to effective advocacy strategies and beyond, Cooper is widely recognized as a key influencer for renewable fuel interests.

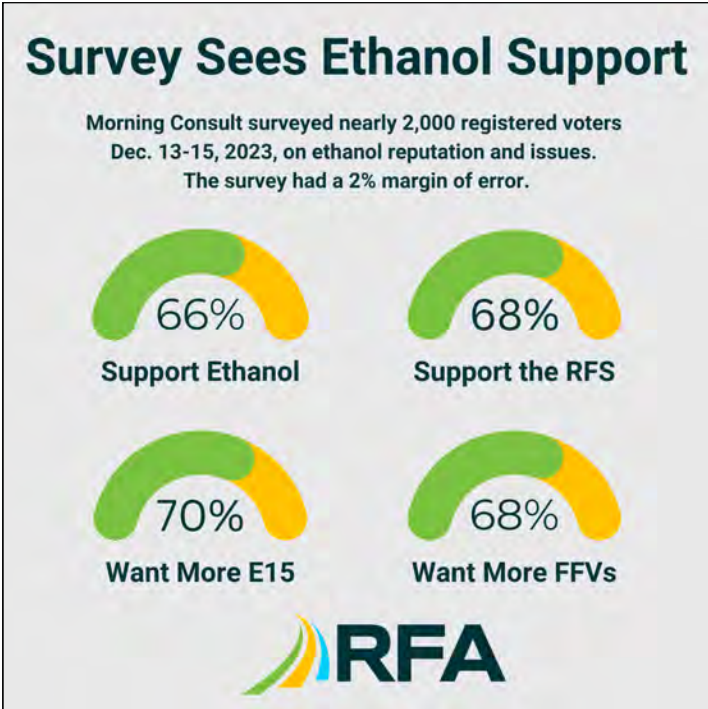
As the application window for the latest tranche of Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) funding closed at the end of the year, Cassie Mullen helped submit applications for retailers in 16 states, representing just under \$20 million in funding.



Missy Ruff took part in a National TRANSCAER Task Group meeting in December at the Association of American Railroads. TRANSCAER saw a significant increase in the completed training numbers, and here's one example: The Spanish version of RFA's Ethanol Safety Seminar increased from 188 completing the program in 2022 to nearly 1,000 attendees completing the program in 2023.

RFA, the Industrial Steel Drum Institute, TRANSCAER, and PHMSA hosted a daylong Steel Drum 101 and Ethanol Safety training seminar. This specialized training attracted nearly 200 participants.

RFA's latest round of quarterly polling of roughly 2,000 voters showed the highest level of support for the Renewable Fuel Standard since we began polling in 2016.



WINTER 2024: PROGRAMS POWERED BY PARTNERSHIP



Taking our Ford Escape PHEFFV to the Washington Auto Show was a terrific way to kick off 2024 by spotlighting the value of E85 in an innovative “all of the above” fuel vehicle. Among those smitten by the technology was Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA), at right.

January

Responding to an invitation to comment, RFA in January urged the California Air Resources Board to increase the **statewide adoption of flex fuel vehicles**. Scott Richman highlighted the growing popularity of E85 ethanol in California, with sales and the number of E85 stations increasing significantly. Ultimately, RFA advocated for a requirement that all new internal combustion engine vehicles sold in California be flex-fuel capable by the 2026 model year, supporting the state's carbon neutrality goals.

At the **DC Auto Show**, RFA's Ford Escape PHEFFV garnered attention from attendees, our supporters on the Hill, and the news media. Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA) took to her social media to post pictures and video of the vehicle, endorsing it alongside her recently introduced Flex Fuel Fairness Act.

Justin Schultz was appointed to the **ASTM 100 RON Subcommittee**. This new RON specification was developed primarily to support the Next Generation Fuels Act. The committee has been working to also add 95 and 98 RON specs.

February

The **2024 National Ethanol Conference** in San Diego had the highest attendance in seven years, underscoring its status as a pivotal event for industry insights and networking. Themed “Powered by Partnerships,” the NEC showcased a series of thought-provoking presentations and panel discussions on topics ranging from SAF and CI reduction to IRA implementation and trade. RFA also held a reception for members of our Young Professionals Network who were in attendance. The program is generously sponsored by Lallemand Biofuels & Distilled Spirits.

In late February, EPA finalized a regulation permitting the sale of E15 during the summer in **eight Midwestern states**. However, the decision postponed the rule's implementation to 2025, leading to ambiguity and confusion regarding the summertime availability of E15 in 2024. RFA's response to EPA's rule dominated the media, with coverage in the Associated Press, New York Times, Politico, The Hill, Des Moines Register, Bloomberg, Reuters and elsewhere.

RFA has been at the forefront of this issue since 2022, working with governors from the eight states and providing critical modeling on E15 air quality.

RFA staff met with **senior White House officials** regarding the administration's proposed tailpipe emissions standards for 2027-2032 light- and medium-duty vehicles. We reiterated our concerns that the proposed rule favors electric vehicles while failing to consider the decarbonization potential of existing biofuels that can improve the emissions profile of the vast majority of cars on the road today.

RFA rolled out its annual review of the **ethanol industry's U.S. economic impact**. In 2023, more than 72,400 U.S. jobs were directly associated with the ethanol industry, with an additional 322,000 indirect and induced jobs supported across all sectors of the economy. The industry created \$32.5 billion in household income and contributed just over \$54.2 billion to the nation's gross domestic product—the second-highest GDP contribution ever.

The **2024 Ethanol Industry Outlook and Pocket Guide** spotlighted 2023 statistics and the opportunity that lies ahead. The key to progress, RFA argued, will be strengthening existing alliances, building new partnerships, and fostering creative collaborations—something we have been doing for more than 40 years.

RFA's **2023 Ethanol and Distillers Grains Export Reports** found that U.S. ethanol industry exports reached a record value of over \$7.1 billion, with ethanol export volumes hitting 1.43 billion gallons, the third-highest ever, and distillers grains shipments slightly declining to 10.8 million metric tons.

RFA launched a comprehensive ad



Scenes from the National Ethanol Conference. Above: Argonne scientist Michael Wang receives the 2024 Award of Excellence; Geoff Cooper pumps gas at an E85 promotion for veterans and the military; industry women celebrate at a reception honoring their accomplishments. Opposite: Cooper's State of the Industry address is always a highlight of the show; USDA Sec. Tom Vilsack provided a Washington update; and political prognosticator Charlie Cook talked about this historic election year.

campaign calling on the Biden Administration to **implement emergency waivers** to ensure drivers would have summertime access to lower-cost E15 fuel. The campaign included digital video ads, inside-the-Beltway radio spots, and advertising on Facebook and Instagram. Additionally, RFA carried out a campaign via radio and digital platforms within the Washington D.C. region to advocate for ethanol as a low-carbon feedstock for sustainable aviation fuel. We also ran a digital campaign in California aimed at boosting ethanol awareness, in conjunction with the National Ethanol Conference.

RFA and Pearson Fuels held a pump promotion during the National

Ethanol Conference, providing **free E85 to veterans and military** and a deep discount to others. It was a great opportunity to thank past and present members of the military and talk about renewable fuels.

March

In March, RFA and other groups turned up the pressure on EPA for an **emergency waiver for summertime E15 sales**. In a letter to Administrator Regan, we made the case that waivers are justified due to ongoing conflicts across the globe that pose risks to the U.S. transportation energy supply.



As part of a national and state-level coalition of biofuel and farm advocates, RFA appealed to the Treasury Department to swiftly resolve any questions standing in the way of efforts to **scale up U.S. production of SAF**. Specifically, we urged the administration to quickly adopt the DOE GREET model for the calculation of SAF tax credits under the Inflation Reduction Act.

In March, RFA weighed in with the New York government on the state’s **“Cap and Invest”** program, highlighting the importance of ethanol’s ability to lower greenhouse gas emissions. RFA stressed that ethanol and other biogenic renewable fuels should be exempt from the program because fermentation and combustion emissions

are inherently carbon neutral.

RFA released a new analysis showing the use of **lower-cost E85 in California saved the state’s drivers \$99 million** in 2023, while cutting GHG emissions by nearly 370,000 metric tons. A record 118.5 million gallons of E85 flex fuel were sold, a 14 percent increase over 2022 and nearly double the volume of 2021.

Ed Hubbard represented U.S. ethanol producers on a **trade mission to Brazil**. He discussed the importance of free trade and coordination between the countries in addressing future ethanol demand growth.

Geoff Cooper hosted a small group conversation with **USDA Secre-**

tary Tom Vilsack and EPA Administrator Michael Regan about SAF, 45Z, E15, and other issues at the Commodity Classic in Houston. RFA’s exhibit on the trade show floor netted hundreds of signatures on a letter to President Biden, which urged action on the summertime sale of E15 for 2024.

The **Girls Auto Clinic** hosted a workshop in West Philadelphia. The workshop—part of a series aimed at women keen on learning about buying, maintaining, and repairing cars—showcased the benefits of ethanol fuels like E15 and E85. Participants also received gifts and information about ethanol from proud sponsor RFA.

SPRING 2024: PLANTING SEEDS FOR INDUSTRY GROWTH

April

On April 19, **EPA announced it would issue emergency fuel waivers** to allow uninterrupted nationwide sales of E15 throughout the summer. This was the result of a months-long concerted effort by RFA and our allies. RFA led media coverage in the Associated Press, Reuters, Politico, The Hill, Brownfield and elsewhere, with the AP article appearing in over 200 outlets, from MSN and ABC News to the San Francisco Chronicle and New York Newsday. While the waivers provided an ad hoc fix for 2024, work continued both in the Senate and the House to resolve the RVP issue.

Final **SAF tax credit (40B) guidance and a modified GREET model** were released by Treasury. The release marked significant progress toward unlocking the door for U.S. ethanol producers and farmers to participate in the emerging market for SAF. However, we noted at the time that more work was needed to fully open the SAF market to ethanol and properly recognize the climate benefits of modern agriculture and biofuels.

RFA became a **founding member of the SAF Coalition**, which launched as a tool to advocate for the establishment of significant and durable federal policies related to the production, consumption and distribution of sustainable aviation fuel. The SAF Coalition is a nonprofit, nonpartisan group representing the full spectrum of the SAF value chain.

With other SAF allies, we called on agriculture committee leaders in the House and Senate to include meaningful SAF provisions, such as the Farm to Fly Act, in the **upcoming farm bill**.

RFA, U.S. Grains Council and Growth Energy jointly submitted comments to the **Brazilian Chamber of Foreign Trade (CAMEX)** regarding the Brazilian tariff on imported U.S. ethanol. The joint comments stated, “Considering this significant discrepancy in our historically productive commercial relationship between countries, we would like to stress that the U.S. industry will continue to advocate for restrictive measures to entry for Brazilian ethanol into the U.S., in the case that the Brazilian government does not re-



Jared Mullendore and Troy Bredenkamp attended the “Ag on the Mall” event in Washington in May, where they met up with Lincolnway Energy Board Member Bill Couser and Klaus-Herbert Rolf, Head of Public Affairs for CLAAS.

think the current tariff policies.”

Geoff Cooper participated in a Farm, Food, and Fuel Summit in Kansas City organized by **Bloomberg Intelligence**, where he was part of a fireside chat with Rob Barnett, Senior Clean Energy Analyst at Bloomberg Intelligence.

May

RFA, along with 24 other trade associations representing a broad spectrum of stakeholders, sent a letter to Treasury pressing for the expedited finalization and release of guidelines for the **45Z Clean Fuels Production Credit**, slated to take effect on January 1. We highlighted the urgency, noting that without timely guidance, our members could encounter substantial operational and financial challenges.

Troy Bredenkamp was listed in *Washingtonian* magazine’s list of **DC’s most influential people of 2024**. Among Troy’s victories was his work to get EPA to support and ultimately issue an emergency waiver that allowed E15 fuel to be sold during the summer months.



Above left: Face-to-face meetings with various federal agencies in Washington were an important part of our work on 45Z tax credits. Above right: Troy Bredenkamp helped Aztalan Bio celebrate its June grand opening in Jefferson, Wisc. At left: Ed Hubbard, Jared Mullendore and Cassie Mullen met with U.S. Grains Council staff and several reporters from Japan, for a background briefing on the U.S. ethanol market and how it relates to Japan and their future.

RFA welcomed a decision from the D.C. Circuit Court that upheld EPA’s **renewable fuel standards for 2020-2022** and rejected the oil refining industry’s challenges to the rule. The court found that EPA exercised its discretion appropriately in setting RFS standards for those years, including a supplemental volume requirement to comply with a 2016 D.C. Circuit Court decision. The decision sets important precedents for future defense of the RFS.

Responding to an invitation for input from the **California Energy Commission** about the state’s unfolding energy transition, we stressed that the state could not reach its ambitious climate goals without E15 and higher blends. “The only practical and cost-effective way to achieve net-zero by 2045, while rebalancing LCFS credits and deficits in the gasoline pool in the near term is through adoption of E15, continued growth in E85 usage, and consideration of mid-level blends like E20-E30.”

In May, Robert White was joined by board member Mick Henderson at the **Government Fleet Expo** in Louisville, where our Ford Escape PHEFFV was on display as we continue to encourage federally regulated fleets to use more ethanol.

June

RFA spearheaded a **series of strategic meetings** in Washington to influence the ongoing discourse regarding the development and implementation of the 45Z regulations. Engagements with key agencies and the White House were instrumental in conveying our analysis of critical aspects of the regulations.

The IRS released its final rule concerning **prevailing wage and apprenticeship requirements** under the Inflation Reduction Act’s clean energy credits. This eagerly anticipated guidance clarified the procedures and requirements for potentially quintupling the credit value for compliant clean fuel producers. Several of RFA’s earlier suggestions were included in the final rule.

RFA released a study documenting the economic and environmental benefits of the world’s first **plug-in electric hybrid flex fuel vehicle (PHEFFV)**, our converted 2022 Ford Escape. After rigorous emissions testing, lifecycle GHG analysis, and nearly 34,000 miles of real-world driving, the



At the International Fuel Ethanol Workshop and Expo in Minneapolis in June, RFA’s booth proved popular. The event also saw former RFA Chair Jeanne McCaherty honored for leadership, and our Veterans for Renewable Fuels team took in a baseball game.

study concluded that a PHEFFV offers distinct advantages over fully electric vehicles.

RFA spotlighted a new study by **University of Wisconsin researcher Tyler Lark**. Unlike Lark’s 2022 study, which claimed U.S. farmers converted millions of acres of grassland to cropland due to expanded ethanol production, the new study reveals that over 30 million acres of U.S. cropland were actually abandoned and transitioned into grassland, forests, and other uses between 1986 and 2018. This finding contradicts the previous narrative and highlights the substantial reduction in cropland area during the biofuels era.

Increased use of lower-carbon liquid fuels in light-duty vehicles would lead to larger and faster reductions in GHG emissions than EPA’s recently finalized EV-forcing tailpipe emissions standards, according to a new study commissioned by the RFA and executed by the **Southwest Research Institute**. A second study by the institute showed that if the existing fleet of flex fuel vehicles used modestly larger amounts of E85, substantial GHG emissions reductions could be achieved.

RFA’s nationally recognized safety program was honored with its **12th consecutive National Achievement Award** from TRANSCAER, a national hazardous materials safety coalition. Missy Ruff also received an Individual Recognition Award for her efforts. RFA sponsored two events in June focused on safety: a Train the Trainer Ethanol Emergency Response webinar and an Ethanol Safety and



Steel Drum 101 webinar.

The **International Fuel Expo and Workshop** in Minneapolis showcased a busy and successful schedule for RFA. Robert White kicked off the conference with a presentation on our PHEFFV project; Troy Bredenkamp participated in a policy panel during the general session; and Tad Hepner moderated a discussion on data capture, reporting, and verification requirements of 45Z tax credits. RFA also held a reception for members of our Young Professionals Network who were in attendance.

Three ethanol industry leaders with RFA ties were recognized with awards at FEW. Dave Zimmerman of Big River Resources received the High Octane Award and former RFA Chairperson Jeanne McCaherty of Guardian Energy received the Women in Ethanol award. The FEW Award of Excellence went to Mark Yancey, of RFA associate member company D3MAX.

SUMMER 2024: RFA BRINGS THE HEAT



July

RFA's annual **Washington-based board meeting** included scores of Capitol Hill visits. Special guests at the meeting included EPA Administrator Michael Regan and USDA Deputy Secretary Xochitl Torres Small.

An RFA-sponsored study by economists at **UC Berkeley and the U.S. Naval Academy** found California drivers could expect to save 20 cents per gallon if the state allowed gas stations to sell E15 fuel, which is approved in all 49 other states. The potential savings for California consumers could reach \$2.7 billion annually.

RFA staff and members took part in activities at the **Republican National Convention** in Milwaukee, where RFA was a sponsor of the Great American Farm Fair celebration. RFA visited with Sen. Roger Marshall (KS) and Rep. Derrick Van Orden (WI) and heard from House Ag Committee Chair GT Thompson (PA), among others. We also co-sponsored local billboards in the Milwaukee metro area with pro-ethanol messaging.

Following a **California Air Resources Board** workshop on potential amendments to state advanced clean cars regulations, RFA urged CARB to require that all new vehicles with internal combustion engines sold within the state be flex-fuel capable to achieve California's emissions goals.

RFA worked with other trade organizations to secure a letter from biofuel supporters in Congress asking Treasury to **expedite the release of rules on the 45Z clean fuel tax credit** so that farmers and biofuel producers will know how to participate in the program. The letter, led by Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA), was signed by an additional 51 lawmakers.

Robert White attended **NCGA's Corn Congress** in Washington, where he met with NCGA's Ethanol Action Team and several state corn grower associations to brief them on the Ford Escape PHEFFV final research report. Several corn organizations helped fund the PHEFFV project. Robert also briefed DOE officials on the PHEFFV results while in town.



The summertime RFA board meeting in Washington is always a great opportunity to connect with leaders like EPA Administrator Michael Regan, Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA) and Rep. Derrick Van Orden (R-WI).

As part of its multi-pronged 45Z advocacy efforts, RFA submitted comments responding to USDA’s request for information (RFI) on **climate-smart agriculture feedstocks**. RFA urged USDA to implement the use of a “book-and-claim” accounting framework for tracking and transferring the GHG benefits of climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices through the biofuels supply chain. RFA included a study from Polaris Analytics & Consulting on the “Impact of 45Z on the Corn Supply Chain.”

July was an **active month for member visits**: Justin Schultz and Troy Bredenkamp traveled to southwest Nebraska to help Trenton Agri Products celebrate its 20th anniversary; Geoff Cooper took part in Guardian Energy meetings in Minneapolis; and Tad Hepner visited Redfield Energy in South Dakota as it marked the production of its billionth gallon of ethanol. Robert White and the Ford Escape went to Marion, Ind., to take part in CIE’s annual customer appreciation day; Hepner traveled across Nebraska to meet with several RFA producer members. And at a Renewable Fuels Nebraska event in Kearney, Jared Mullendore spoke to RFN members about federal policy issues.

August

RFA cosponsored an ag leadership event during the **Democratic National Convention**, where we introduced speaker Rep. Elissa Slotkin, running to replace retiring Sen. Debbie Stabenow (MI). RFA staff and members also caught up with USDA Dep. Sec. Xochitl Torres Small, USDA Sec. Tom Vilsack, and Reps. Nikki Budzinski (IL), Sharice Davids (KS), Robin Kelly (IL), Dan Kildee (MI) and Jim Clyburn (SC).

RFA’s **Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) training** program on Preventive Controls for Animal Food compliance, tailored specifically for ethanol industry personnel, took place in Des Moines. Twenty participants from several RFA member companies received FSPCA Certificates of Completion and will be recognized by FDA as meeting the requirements for a Preventive Controls Qualified Individual (PCQI). Ethanol plants are required to have a PCQI develop and implement the facility’s food safety plan.

Geoff Cooper spoke to attendees of the **2024 No Bull Summit** in St. Louis, where this year’s focus was on challenges and opportunities surrounding SAF and other new markets. Cooper spoke on navigating the complex policy and regulatory issues surrounding SAF.



Above: Geoff Cooper enjoys time with House Ag Committee Chair GT Thompson (R-PA) at the Farm Progress Show in Boone, Iowa. Below: Our FSMA training class took place at the Iowa Corn headquarters, and was managed by lead instructor Justin Schultz and Ann Lewis.



RFA held an **EH&S Committee meeting**, where participants heard from industry experts about recent updates to the EPA’s Risk Management Program and OSHA’s Process Safety Management program.

RFA kicked off a **media campaign in Farm Progress newsletters** covering several states to inform readers about the importance of year-round E15 and urging them to take action by contacting their federal lawmakers. It was seen in newsletters throughout the Midwest.

Kendra Coulson participated in the 15th annual **Biofuels: Science and Sustainability Tour** hosted by the Iowa Renewable Fuels Association and sponsored by the Renewable Fuels Foundation, with a primary goal of educating Congressional staff and regulators about biofuels. Robert White provided an ethanol industry overview to the participants.



RFA sponsors competitive anglers to promote the use of ethanol in boating. Dylan Faulconer in September scored first place and biggest fish, reaching third place overall in the Midwest Crappie Chaser standings, easily securing a spot in the October championship at Perry Lake in Kansas. Ryan Armstrong also competed under RFA sponsorship in Major League Fishing bass tournaments across the country.

RFA was front and center at an event in Minnesota spotlighting the USDA’s **Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program** and other Biden administration initiatives supporting ethanol. USDA Sec. Tom Vilsack, Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Rep. Angie Craig (D-MN) and others were featured speakers. Cassie Mullen represented RFA at the event, and former RFA Chair Jeanne McCaherty spoke about the industry’s priorities as part of a panel discussion.

A new third-party analysis released by RFA indicated that **Class I railroads often appear to differentiate service** levels across different commodities and customers. In general, trains carrying ethanol and grain tend to experience longer dwell times (delays), slower speeds, and longer turnaround times than trains carrying other goods like crude oil, coal, and intermodal shipping containers. The study was shared with STB in response to their invitation for comments on improving rail service.

During the August recess, **congressional-related events in home districts** picked up steam. Jared Mullendore was on hand when members of the House Ways & Means Committee Randy Feenstra (R-IA), Adrian Smith (R-NE) and Nicole Malliotakis (R-NY) toured Elite Octane, led by RFA board member Nick Bowdish. RFA staff also interacted with a slew of House members and USDA officials at the Farm Progress Show in late August.

More member visits: Robert White spoke at IFF’s 2024 Advanced Customer Workshop in Des Moines. He also spoke at Golden Grain Energy’s 19th annual “Friends of Ethanol” event in Charles City, Iowa. Meanwhile, Geoff Cooper was proud to speak at Lincolnland Agri-Energy’s 20th-anniversary celebration in Robinson, IL. Elsewhere, Justin Schultz and Ann Lewis visited Lincolnway Energy.

September

In a detailed legal brief submitted to the **D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals**, RFA and dozens of other groups argued that the EPA unlawfully exceeded its statutory authority and acted arbitrarily and capriciously by finalizing vehicle tailpipe emissions standards that would essentially phase out liquid-fueled engines and mandate increased production of electric vehicles. The groups also argued that EPA failed to consider low-carbon alternatives—like renewable fuels and FFVs—and likewise failed to consider how the standards conflict with the RFS and “Congress’s mandate to increase the nation’s use of renewable fuel.”

After a columnist for the **Minnesota Star Tribune** attacked corn ethanol and a CO2 pipeline project, RFA and the Minnesota BioFuels Association collaborated on a published letter to the editor in response, highlighting ethanol’s economic and emissions benefits and dispelling fallacies.

RFA’s latest quarterly poll of 2,000 voters, conducted by Morning Consult, found **support remains high for ethanol and higher blends**. In a new poll question, a strong majority of respondents said it is important for their vote this November to protect consumers’ ability to choose the type of vehicle and fuel that works best for them (79%) and for the U.S. to have “an all the above” energy approach (70%).

On the road again: Robert White traveled to Grand Island, Neb., for the Husker Harvest Days farm show where our Ford Escape PHEFFV was on display at the Chief Ethanol exhibit. ... Justin Schultz attended the Nebraska Ethanol Board’s EHS Summit, where he spoke about rail safety and provided an industry update. ... Tad Hepner spoke at the North American SAF Conference and Expo, in a roundtable discussion reviewing policy and marketplace progress on SAF. He also moderated a panel on SAF synergies with existing biofuel production sites.

ABOUT RFA

Our Vision: Help the world by unlocking the power of renewable fuels and bioproducts.

Our Mission: Drive growth in sustainable renewable fuels and bioproducts for a better future

Our Team:

Geoff Cooper – President & CEO

Troy Bredenkamp – Senior Vice President, Government & Public Affairs

Ken Colombini – Communications Director

Kendra Coulson – Marketing & Membership Manager

Mary Giglio – Vice President, Events & Initiatives

Tad Hepner – Vice President, Strategy & Innovation

Marylou Hoffman – Office Manager/HR

Edward S. Hubbard, Jr. – General Counsel & Vice President, Government Affairs

Ann Lewis – Senior Analyst

Cassie Mullen – Director of Market Development

Jared Mullendore – Policy Counsel & Director of Government Affairs

Scott Richman – Chief Economist

Missy Ruff – Director of Safety & Technical Programs

Justin Schultz – Director of Environment, Health & Safety

Robert White – Senior Vice President, Industry Relations & Market Development

www.EthanolRFA.org

RFA Headquarters

16024 Manchester Rd.
Suite 101
Ellisville, MO 63011
(636) 594-2284

Washington Office

601 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
North Building - Suite 200
Washington, DC 20004
(202) 289-3835