



LISTA 5 - INGLÊS

In Brazil, biofuels dream is already reality

Chuck Grassley championed ethanol as early as the 1980s, before most Americans even knew what it was. In the 1990s, he worked hard to increase ethanol production and consumption in the United States. As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, he created tax credits for ethanol, which years later were extended to other biofuels. His stated goal: for Americans to derive 25 percent of their power from renewable sources by 2025.

ISP: Provedores de serviço de internet.

But Grassley realizes there is one big obstacle to reaching that goal on the back of ethanol: American public opinion. Blamed for higher food prices and criticized for overstating ethanol's environmental benefits, the U.S. biofuel industry faces a serious image problem.

"Three decades ago people asked for a renewable fuel," said Grassley, a Republican. "Today there is such an industry, responsible for about 5 percent of America's fuel consumption, and now we are considered villains."

The problems confronting the U.S. industry stand in sharp contrast to the experience of the world's other major ethanol producer – Brazil. Together, Brazil and the United States lead a rising market, poised to produce a record 16 billion gallons this year. Yet biofuels have gained the kind of mainstream acceptance in Brazil that Grassley can still only hope for in the United States.

That is partly because the Brazilians have come far closer to achieving the ultimate promise of biofuels – the generation of a greener, cheaper alternative to gasoline. Production methods in Brazil are considered the world's most efficient, helping make ethanol commercially viable for the masses. From the Amazon region to their country's deep south, Brazilians now consume more ethanol than gas at the pumps. [...]



According to a report released in June by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, ethanol from sugar cane is the cleanest fuel in the world, with its production and consumption reducing emissions of greenhouse gases by up to 90 percent compared with gasoline. The process of transforming sugar cane into ethanol requires eight times less energy than corn.

Unlike corn, which accounts for the bulk of U.S. ethanol, sugar cane is also grown in areas where it is less likely to compete with grains such as wheat or other varieties of maize that are vital to global food supplies. Sugar-based ethanol's negligible impact on world food supplies is one of the major reasons it has been embraced without controversy in Brazil, even as critics in the United States have assailed their domestic corn-based industry for driving up global grain prices. Sugar ethanol is also more efficient. The cost of producing ethanol from corn is three times the cost of ethanol from sugar cane.

Luciana Pereira Franco, Oct. 29, 2008. Disponível em:
<www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/008/10/8/AR00810801368_pf.html>. (Adapt.).



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