

# How California can boost biofuel production to cut pollution and help the economy

December 4 2015, by Kathy Wyer

---

California has not taken full advantage of opportunities to increase its in-state production of biofuel, despite state policies that encourage biofuel consumption, according to a report (PDF) by the Climate Change and Business Research Initiative at the UCLA and UC Berkeley law schools.

Coming on the heels of [new Environmental Protection Agency rules](#) on biofuels requirements, the report underscores the importance of local production of low-carbon biofuel. It suggests that the state could reduce emissions by not shipping feedstocks from out-of-state or overseas, spurring development of carbon-reducing byproducts like biochar compost, and reducing the risk of wildfire. The report also finds that [biofuel production](#)—for example, harvesting biofuel feedstocks from renewable sources such as corn, sugarcane and food waste—could provide jobs and create revenue in economically challenged parts of the state.

"California's environmental laws and policies have created an effective framework for cutting down our use of [petroleum fuels](#)," said Ethan Elkind, a co-author of the report and associate director of the [climate change](#) initiative at UCLA School of Law's Emmett Institute on Climate Change and the Environment and UC Berkeley Law's Center for Law, Energy and the Environment.

"These high-carbon emitting fuels power our cars, trucks and airplanes, but pollute the air, pose widespread health risks and threaten the stability of the earth's climate," he said. "We have the potential in California to

produce a significant amount of low-carbon fuel to meet our transportation needs over the coming decades, but the state has not yet taken full advantage of its own agricultural opportunities to increase biofuel production."

California will need more federal and state action to achieve the greater economic and environmental payoff that can come from in-state biofuel production, according to the report.

The report identifies key barriers to biofuel production in California and outlines numerous solutions to overcome them. Among the possible solutions are financial incentives for automakers and gas stations that would allow them to sell greater amounts of low-carbon biofuels and higher blend rates, and a state-launched process to study the optimal reduction of nitrogen oxides, greenhouse gases, and petroleum fuels.

Provided by University of California, Los Angeles

Citation: How California can boost biofuel production to cut pollution and help the economy (2015, December 4) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-12-california-boost-biofuel-production-pollution.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.