

# France reconsiders plans to boost biofuel use

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French Agriculture Minister, Stéphane Le Foll (R), answers journalists' questions after the weekly cabinet meeting at the Elysee Presidential Palace in Paris. France said Wednesday it would reconsider its plans to further develop the use of biofuel, once seen as a potential source of cheap alternative energy but now blamed for soaring food prices.

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France's targets for incorporating biofuel elements into traditional fuel, "which could result in large quantities of agricultural products being diverted from food use, should be put up for discussion", Agriculture Minister Stéphane Le Foll said.

He made the comment in a report on the new Socialist government's

action plan for agriculture.

That plan, presented Wednesday to the cabinet, calls for a seven percent cap on the incorporation into traditional fuel of so-called first generation biofuel, which is made from the sugars and oils found in arable crops.

This should not have any effect on the "E10" biofuel available at filling stations in France, which contains up to 10 percent ethanol.

France plans to reach the 10 percent European Union target of renewable energy in fuel by boosting the use of second-generation biofuels, which are made from [crop residues](#), waste, algae or [woody material](#), according to the action plan.

On Tuesday it emerged that the EU plans to trim targets on biofuel use.

In 2009, the EU fixed a target for renewables to account for 20 percent of all the bloc's [energy consumption](#) and 10 percent in the transport sector, with biofuels set to play a growing role.

The aim was to reduce [greenhouse gas emissions](#), seen as responsible for global warming.

But a draft EU proposal seen by AFP Tuesday said some [biofuel](#) production was failing to deliver hoped-for reductions in [greenhouse gases](#) because changing land use to grow crops for energy had its own adverse impact on emissions.

Biofuels have also been repeatedly identified as a factor in rising prices for vegetable oils, corn, soja and cereals.

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