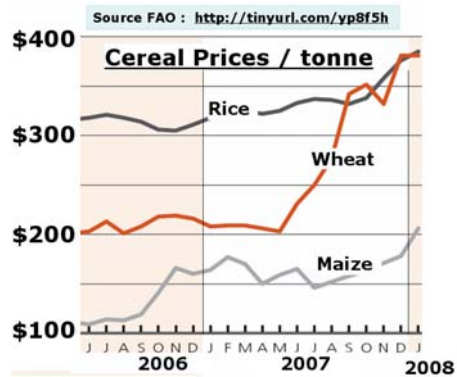


Food or (Bio)fuels?

More and more grain and vegetable oil which should be used for food is being turned into biofuels for transport. And more land needed to grow food is turned into biofuel plantations. Cereals – corn, wheat, bread and pasta – and vegetable oil are becoming more expensive. Meat and dairy are also becoming more expensive, because grain is now turned into ethanol (biofuel), instead of feeding animals. According to the UN World Food Programme, 100 million more people are going hungry now because of higher food prices.



Are biofuels the only reason why food prices are rising?

Agrofuels are one of the main reasons behind rising food prices. Today's crisis has its roots in 'free trade' policies which have dismantled support for small farmers and sustainable, biodiverse agriculture as well as scrapping all controls of food prices. Large agribusiness firms like ADM, Cargill and Bunge which already dominate the food markets are now making record profits both from agrofuels and from rising food prices. Climate change, soil erosion and freshwater depletion are already causing major crop losses – and biofuels are making all of those worse.

Biofuels make climate change worse:

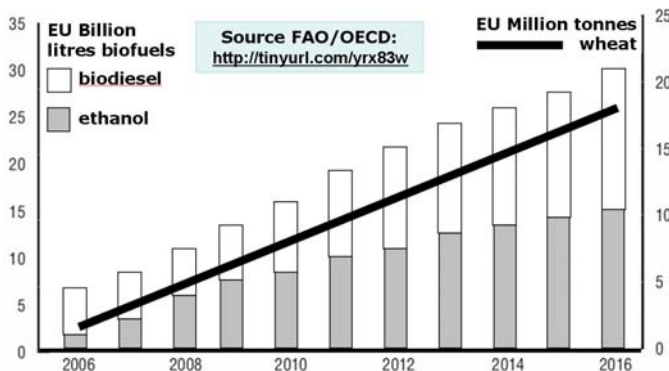
Turning food into biofuels is even worse for the climate than using petrol or diesel. This is because more land, including forests and grasslands, has to be cleared, releasing vast amounts of CO₂, and more nitrogen-rich fertilisers also mean more climate change.

What is happening in poorer countries?

Record wheat prices and high prices for other crops such as wheat are catastrophic for people in poorer countries. There have been food riots and protests in over 40 countries. In East Africa, up to 13 million lives are at risk because of high food prices as well as drought. In Afghanistan, 2.55 million more people need food aid because they can no longer afford wheat, largely due to biofuels.

What is the EU and UK doing?

Planning to turn much more wheat into ethanol – a 12-fold EU increase by 2016 (see graph showing EU plans). The UK wheat surplus in 2007 was around 0.75 million tonnes. With planned current ethanol refinery expansion, we are headed for a 3 million tonnes deficit by 2010.



What are others saying?

"A crime against humanity" – Jean Ziegler, Special UN Rapporteur for the Right to Food, who calls for a 5 year moratorium on biofuel production

"The agrofuels push will exacerbate Africa's climate and food security problems even more" – African NGOs calling for an African agrofuel moratorium

"Our principal objective is to guarantee food sovereignty, as the expansion of the production of biofuels aggravates hunger in the world. We cannot maintain our tanks full while stomachs go empty." – 6 Latin American NGO networks

"We will have a significant gap <in food aid>, and we will need an extra half billion dollars just to meet existing assessed needs." Josette Sheeran, the head of the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), February 25th 2008.

What is our government doing about the situation?

Since April this year, all petrol and diesel in the UK has to be blended with biofuel. This greatly increases the demand for biofuels. At least 5 large ethanol refineries are being built or planned in the UK to turn around millions of tonnes of wheat every year into fuel that will lead to a UK wheat deficit. And it's the same across Europe and many other countries. Unless governments worldwide stop promoting biofuels, food prices will continue to go up, *and the world is likely to see famines.*



What you can do:

- Sign up to regular email action alerts and campaigns: Email info@biofuelwatch.org.uk or sign up via the website.
- Contact us if you would like to get involved in campaigning against agrofuels. We are all volunteers and welcome any help people can give, and we can also let you know if there's a local group where you live.
- Tell your MP or MEP that we need an agrofuel moratorium now.

www.biofuelwatch.org.uk